

**STANDARD & TRANSMISSION-BASED
PRECAUTIONS EDUCATION:
*A POST-PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY
UPDATE***



Beth Israel Lahey Health




Standard precautions protect both healthcare personnel and patients






- Standard precautions are the *minimum* standard that should be practiced:
 - By **all** healthcare personnel,
 - During the care of **all** patients,
 - At **all** times, *and*
 - In **all** settings
- Standard precautions should be used *whether or not a patient appears infectious or symptomatic*
- When practiced consistently, Standard precautions can prevent transmission of infection among patients and colleagues


Use Standard Precautions

Always:

-  **Perform hand hygiene** before and after contact with patients or their environment.
-  **Clean equipment** with germicidal wipes between patients and follow contact time guidelines.
-  **Assess your patients and yourself** for symptoms each day.

As Needed:

-  **Wear gloves** when handling body fluids or non-intact skin, including any rashes. Perform hand hygiene after removing gloves.
-  **Wear a mask** and eye protection to shield your face when likely to be splashed or sprayed, and when you or the patient has respiratory symptoms, even if mild.
-  **Wear a gown** to protect your skin and clothes when likely to be splashed or sprayed, including when caring for patients with draining wounds or incontinence.

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Produced by BILH Infection Control. Adapted from material developed by Cambridge Health Alliance. 118264 standard 5/23 LI

Key components of Standard precautions represent core practices in infection prevention



- Practice hand hygiene



- Clean and disinfect the environment and shared equipment



- Assess risk of activity being performed to determine appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) needed



- Minimize potential exposures (respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette)

Hand hygiene is one of the most important elements of Standard precautions



- Hand hygiene should be performed regularly throughout the workday including but not limited to:
 - Before touching a patient or their environment
 - Before clean or aseptic procedures
 - Before eating, drinking or handling food and medications
 - After touching a patient or their environment
 - After potential blood or body fluid exposure
- Alcohol-based hand rub is the preferred method for hand hygiene in most clinical situations
- Hand hygiene with soap and water is required when hands are visibly soiled, after using the restroom, or as directed by Infection Control



Cleaning of shared equipment is important in preventing of transmission of pathogens

- Clean and disinfect (or sterilize, depending on the item) shared medical equipment before use on another patient
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for use (MIFU) when cleaning, disinfecting or sterilizing equipment
- Allow for appropriate contact times of hospital-approved germicidal wipes and disinfectant products
- Wear appropriate PPE based on the risk of blood and body fluid exposure and splash or spray
- Discard any disposable equipment after single patient use



Respiratory hygiene is a core practice in preventing infection between individuals

- **Respiratory hygiene includes:**
 - Wearing a mask when experiencing even one cold or flu-like symptom, even if it seems mild
 - Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or an elbow, not your hands
 - Keeping hand hygiene supplies, masks, tissues and no-touch waste bins easily visible and available for use throughout the year
- **With the end of universal masking, remember to:**
 - Perform a self-assessment for respiratory or systemic symptoms at the start of your workday
 - Make a personal decision about if and when to wear a mask
 - Respect the mask choice of your colleagues and patients



Universal masking was an expansion of respiratory hygiene earlier in the COVID-19 pandemic

Universal masking is **not** required as of 5/12/23, *except when indicated by a “Mask Required” sign for entering the room/bedspace of patients within 100 days of:*

- Solid organ transplant
- Allogenic bone marrow transplant
- Autologous bone marrow transplant
- CAR-T therapy



Other pandemic-specific interventions related to respiratory hygiene and PPE are changing as of 5/12/23



- Respirators are no longer required to be worn when performing high risk procedures in **asymptomatic patients**
- Note that respirators should continue to be worn based on the pathogen of concern (i.e., Transmission-based precautions)
- Eye protection will no longer be required routinely for entry into a patient's room or bedspace for **asymptomatic patients**
- Testing of **asymptomatic patients** for COVID-19 will no longer be required upon admission to a BILH facility

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Transmission-based precautions are NOT changing



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- **Transmission-based precautions are added to Standard precautions, when indicated based on the pathogen of concern**
- Continue to follow local infection control guidelines for patients on Transmission-based precautions (such as Airborne, Contact and Droplet precautions)
- Gowns, gloves, respirators and eye protection still are required for the care of patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19



When to wear PPE: Masks & eye protection

- Wear when indicated by **Standard precautions** to shield your face when likely to be splashed or sprayed
 - When a patient is actively coughing
 - While emptying a patient's collection device
 - If you are performing phlebotomy or a lumbar puncture
 - During a high-risk procedure
- Wear the appropriate mask when indicated by **Transmission-based precautions**, for example:
 - TB, measles: Respirator
 - COVID-19: Respirator plus eye protection
 - Meningococcus, pertussis: Surgical mask plus eye protection





When to wear PPE: Gloves

- Wear gloves following **Standard precautions** when there is potential exposure to:
 - Blood or body fluids
 - Non-intact skin
 - Rashes
- Wear gloves as indicated by **Transmission-based precautions**, for example when caring for patients with:
 - Carbapenamase-resistant enterobacterales (CRE)
 - *Candida auris*
 - *C. difficile*
- Remember to **perform hand hygiene before *and* after glove removal** to prevent contamination of the environment and transmission of pathogens to your next patient





When to wear PPE: Gowns

- Wear a gown to protect your skin and clothing when likely to be splashed or sprayed (**Standard precautions**), including when caring for patients with:
 - Large, draining wounds
 - Uncontrollable secretions, such as vomiting
 - Urinary or fecal incontinence
- Wear a gown as indicated by **Transmission-based precautions**, for example when caring for patients with:
 - Carbapenemase-resistant enterobacterales (CRE)
 - *Candida auris*
 - *C. difficile*



Standard precautions help us to maintain a safe and clean environment for everyone

- Place patients with symptoms or potentially infectious processes in private rooms preferentially
- Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces at least once daily
- Dispose of any items saturated with blood or body fluids in biohazard containers and any sharps in the appropriate receptacles
- Handle linens and textiles carefully to prevent contamination of your own clothing or the surrounding environment



Remember to use Standard precautions for all patients and in all settings



Use Standard Precautions

Always:



Perform hand hygiene before and after contact with patients or their environment.



Clean equipment with germicidal wipes between patients and follow contact time guidelines.



Assess your patients and yourself for symptoms each day.

As Needed:



Wear gloves when handling body fluids or non-intact skin, including any rashes. Perform hand hygiene after removing gloves.



Wear a mask and eye protection to shield your face when likely to be splashed or sprayed, and when you or the patient has respiratory symptoms, even if mild.



Wear a gown to protect your skin and clothes when likely to be splashed or sprayed, including when caring for patients with draining wounds or incontinence.

Still have questions about Standard precautions or appropriate PPE use?



- [CDC Core Infection Prevention and Control Practices for Safe Healthcare Delivery in All Settings](#)
- [BILH Interim Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) guideline](#)
- [Standard precautions poster](#) available for staff areas
- Contact your local Infection Control team