

	<b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>  Number: <b>30-10</b>  Title: <b>Contact Precautions</b>
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## **Introduction**

Contact transmission refers to the transfer of microorganisms by direct contact with the client (hand or skin-to-skin contact) or indirect contact with environmental surfaces or client care items in the client’s environment.

## **Definitions**

### **Cohort:**

- Two or more clients colonized or infected with the same organism who are separated physically (i.e., in a separate room or ward) from other clients who are not colonized or infected with that organism.

### **Spatial Isolation:**

- Separation by distance (minimum of 2 meters) and/or physical barriers (privacy curtains).

## **Policy**

1. In addition to Routine Practices, use Contact Precautions for clients known or suspected to be infected or colonized with a microorganism requiring Contact Precautions as outlined in [30-50 Appendix A – Communicable Diseases Reference Table – Precautions by Etiology or Clinical Presentation](#) (i.e., [40-50 ESBL](#), [40-110 MRSA](#), [40-190 VRE](#), [40-30 CDI](#), etc.). Clients identified with a microorganism that require Contact Precautions will have their health records flagged at the direction of Infection Prevention and Control so that at each admission to the healthcare facility, appropriate additional precautions can be initiated.
2. **Only contacts to an Antibiotic Resistant Organism (ARO) related to an ARO Outbreak require Contact Precautions.** See [55-30 ARO Outbreak – Acute Care](#) policy. Screening requirements for clients with AROs, including contacts of ARO clients can be found in [60-30 Screening for Antibiotic Resistant Organisms - Medical Directives](#) policy.

## Purpose

1. To protect the clients, visitors and healthcare workers by preventing and controlling the spread of infectious disease throughout the facility by identifying and interrupting the specific route of transmission.

## Procedure

### 1. Client Placement

- Place the client in a single room with private bathroom.
- Post [Contact Precautions](#)\* sign (SHR Printing Services #102106).
- The dedicated PPE station must be placed away from any possible sources of contamination such as sinks and sharps containers.
- The dedicated PPE station such as a supply cart needs to be properly stocked and must be located outside the room. Supplies should include:
  - Outside the room:
    - Alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR)
    - Gloves (3 sizes)
    - Clean gowns
    - Hospital grade disinfectant
  - Inside the room:
    - Waste basket
    - Dirty linen hamper
    - ABHR
- Attach the precaution label to inside chart cover
- The additional precaution stickers can be ordered through Stores/Materials Management (Contact Precautions - SKU # 201037)
- If a single room is unavailable using spatial isolation or cohorting may be necessary:
  - Post [Contact Precautions](#) sign and [STOP](#)\* sign on privacy curtain.
  - Keep privacy curtain pulled, if possible. The inside of the curtain is considered client environment and the outside of the curtain healthcare environment.
  - The cart with clean supplies is placed outside the privacy curtain, where gown and gloves are donned.
  - The linen hamper and waste basket are placed inside the privacy curtain, where gown and gloves are removed.
- If cohorting and/or using spatial isolation:
  - A. Place clients who are colonized or infected with the same organism together:
    - Cohort and spatially isolate the clients with the **lowest** risk of transmission:
      - continent
      - good hygiene
      - skin lesions or wounds covered by dressings
      - able to control respiratory secretions
      - capable of self-care and able to comply with infection control precautions
    - Conditions that increase risk of transmission:
      - Presence of excessive wound drainage
      - Fecal incontinence

- All other discharges (secretions & excretions) from the body
- **Vulnerable clients to colonization or infection are those clients with:**
  - Severe diseases especially those who are immunocompromised or who have underlying medical conditions (i.e., organ transplant, hematopoietic stem cell transplant)
  - Recent surgery
  - Indwelling medical devices (i.e., urinary catheter, central venous line and endotracheal tubes)
  - Open draining wounds
- B. Identify clients with the least risk of transmission in private rooms and cohort them using spatial isolation (as noted above) in the same room. The client with the highest risk of transmission will be placed in a private room.
- C. Clients who are NOT colonized or infected with the same organism:
  - Consult with Infection Prevention and Control.

## 2. Hand Hygiene

- Perform hand hygiene as per [20-20 Hand Hygiene](#) policy in Infection Prevention & Control Manual using either alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) or liquid soap and water.
- Client's hands should be cleansed before and after eating, and after going to the bathroom, assist the client if needed.

## 3. Personal Protective Equipment

### Gloves and Gown

- Always perform hand hygiene before donning and doffing gloves and/or gown.
- Glove and gown for all direct contact with the client or the environmental surfaces.
- Choose a glove suitable for the task. Change gloves and perform hand hygiene after contact with infectious material that may contain high concentrations of microorganisms.
- Gowns are single use only. Remove immediately if wet.
- Perform hand hygiene before leaving the room.
- Avoid contact with environmental surfaces when leaving the room.
- See [20-150 Personal Protective Equipment - Donning and Doffing](#) policy.

## 4. Client Transportation

- Ensure the Additional Precautions sticker is on the inside of the client chart
- Notify receiving department that Contact Precautions are required.
- Lay chart on clean towel if placing on client's lap or bed or bag chart.
- Glove and gown for transport of client and when anticipating direct contact with client.
- Avoid contact with surfaces en route. Use elbow to push elevator buttons.
- Use clean sheet to cover client.
- When using unit's wheelchair disinfect before using for next client.
- Clean equipment with a hospital disinfectant.
- Transportation of the client to other departments should be limited to essential procedures only.
- Have client perform hand hygiene prior to leaving their room.

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- When leaving their room the client must have on a freshly laundered gown/housecoat. Gloves not required for clients.

#### 5. Client Activities

- **Acute care:** Limit client activities to necessary tests, therapies and exercise. Avoid common areas like kitchen, TV and play rooms. Refer to handout: [Contact Precautions – Client, Family & Visitor Information](#).
- **Long term care:** There is no need to restrict client’s participation in the facility therapies/activities. Assist client with hand hygiene prior to leaving the room.

#### 6. Client Care Equipment

- Remove unnecessary items by limiting the amount of supplies taken into the room to avoid unnecessary waste at client’s discharge.
- Dedicate noncritical client-care equipment to a single client (i.e., stethoscope, blood pressure cuff, tourniquet, vacutainer, laundry hamper stand, walker and commode).
- Any equipment that comes in direct contact with the client shall be wiped with a hospital disinfectant.
- If sharing of equipment is unavoidable clean and disinfect between clients.
- Dietary trays from clients on Contact Precautions can be placed on dietary tray carts because the cart is washed after each use.
- Dietary trays from clients on Contact Precautions left after pickup by Food and Nutrition staff should be bagged and left for pick up in a designated area.
- Gloves and gown are to be worn for pickup of dietary trays of clients on additional precautions.

#### 7. Visitors

- Instruct visitors regarding hand hygiene before and after client contact and/or entering or exiting the client room.
- Gowns and gloves are not required unless the visitor provides direct care (i.e., feeding, bathing, toileting, transferring, etc.)
- Refer to the Information Handout - [Contact Precautions – Client, Family & Visitor Information](#).

#### 8. Client and Family Teaching

- Clients should understand the nature of their infectious disease and the precautions being used, as well as the prevention of transmission of disease to other clients, family and friends during their hospital stay and upon their return to the community. Provide the client information handout titled [Contact Precautions – Client, Family & Visitor Information](#).

#### 9. Environmental Cleaning

- Room cleaning with a hospital grade disinfectant is performed while wearing personal protective equipment for Contact Precautions.
- Following discharge or discontinuation of precautions:
  - Contact Precaution sign shall remain in place until cleaning is completed.

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- Wear personal protective equipment for Contact Precautions.
- Privacy curtains are to be changed.
- A precaution clean is performed for all clients who are on additional precautions.

### **References**

1. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *Guidelines for isolation precautions in hospitals*. Hospital Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC), 1996;
2. Health Canada. Infection control guidelines. Routine practices and additional precautions for preventing the transmission of infection in health care. *CCDR* 1999; 25S4:45, 59, 67, 73.