



## Droplet Contact Precautions Fact Sheet

### What are Droplet Precautions?

Germs are spread by large droplets that are produced when a person coughs or sneezes. These droplets are pushed a short distance through the air and settle in the eyes, nose or mouth of another person. Droplets generally travel 1 metre (3 feet) or less in distance and can settle on surfaces. Droplet Precautions help stop the spread of germs, which can be coughed or sneezed out. This is called Droplet Transmission.

### What are Contact Precautions?

Germs can be spread directly by physical contact, such as when shaking hands, or indirectly, when someone touches an item someone else may have touched such as equipment, telephone or other objects. This is called Contact Transmission. Contact Precautions help stop the spread of germs from one person to another by direct or indirect contact. Contact and Droplet Precautions help stop the spread of germs carried by droplet and contact transmission.

### What hospital procedures are used for Droplet & Contact Precautions?

- The patient may be given a private room. The door can be kept open. If the patient is not placed in a private room, the curtain may be drawn around the bed
- A sign will be placed on the door or cubicle curtain to let everyone know the special precautions required
- Staff will wear facial protection when providing care
- Staff will wear gloves and may wear long sleeved gowns when they have contact with the patient or objects in the room
- Staff will take the patient out of the room for medically essential purposes only
- Before entering or leaving the room all staff, patients and visitors will wash their hands with soap and water if visibly soiled, or use an alcohol-based hand rub

### What can the patient do to help?

- Cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when they cough or sneeze, and throw the tissue away in the wastebasket in the room followed by hand hygiene
- Stay in the room unless staff has approved leaving the room
- Put on a mask before leaving the room and keep it on at all times when out of the room
- Wash hands with soap and water if visibly soiled, or use an alcohol-based hand rub before leaving the room, after coughing or sneezing, after going to the bathroom, and before eating

### What should the visitors do?

- Read the sign on the door and discuss with staff on the precautions to follow
- They will be educated by staff if they are to wear long sleeved gowns, gloves and masks while in the room
- Ask the staff if they have any questions
- Wash their hands with soap and water if visibly soiled, or use an alcohol-based hand rub before entering or leaving the room
- The number of visitors should be limited