

What You Need to Know About Droplet Precautions

Information for patients and families

Read this brochure to learn more about what to expect if you are placed on droplet precautions during your stay in the hospital.



Patient Education



UHN

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What are droplet precautions?

Droplet precautions are steps we take in the hospital to prevent spreading infections (germs) to patients, visitors and staff.

We use different types of precautions depending on how germs spread.

Droplet precautions are used for germs that spread through droplets when a person sneezes or coughs.

Why am I on droplet precautions?

There are different reasons for using droplet precautions in the hospital.

Sometimes we use precautions when we are still trying to rule out a possible infection, such as pneumonia or the flu.

Other times, we use precautions when we know there is a positive result for the germs or infections we test for in the hospital.

Ask your health care team if you have any questions about being on precautions.

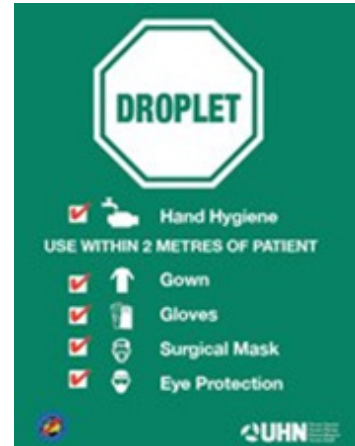
Can droplet precautions be used in a double room?

If you need droplet precautions, you may be moved to a single room. If you are in a shared room, the curtain between you and your roommate will be closed. This is called **isolation**. It is an important way to stop the spread of germs to other people.

What happens if I need droplet precautions?

If you need droplet precautions while you are in the hospital, we follow these safety rules:

- We put a sign on the door with instructions for all staff and visitors.
- Everyone entering your room will wear a gown, gloves, mask and eye protection. This includes all staff and visitors.
- Your health care team will ask you to wash your hands regularly with soap and water (or use alcohol-based hand gel), especially after using the bathroom.
- We will clean and disinfect the surfaces and equipment in your room.



Am I allowed to leave my room if I am on droplet precautions?

We will provide your care in your room.

You may only leave the room if a staff member from the Infection Prevention and Control team say it is safe to do so. Before leaving the room, you must wash your hands and wear a fresh clean gown or clothing.

You may be asked to wear a mask.

What if I have to share the bathroom?

Wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand gel (sanitizer) after using the washroom and before eating or drinking. This will help prevent the spread of germs.

Can I have visitors?

Yes, you can have visitors.

Your visitors must follow the instructions on the sign posted outside your room and put on personal protective equipment (gown, gloves, mask and eye protection) before visiting with you.

How long will I be on droplet precautions?

This is different for each person. The Infection Prevention and Control team assesses all patients on precautions and talks with your health care team every day.

You will be on droplet precautions until your symptoms get better or you meet the hospital's criteria for coming off of precautions.

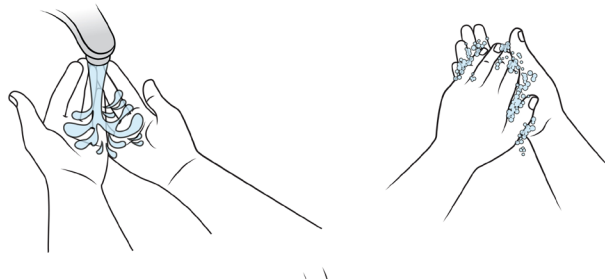
Will I have to stay in hospital until I stop droplet precautions?

No, you do not need to stay in the hospital until your precautions stop. Your health care team will let you know when you are safe and ready to return home.

Is my family at risk when I go home?

If you are still having symptoms when you go home, make sure you cover your cough and sneeze with a tissue or your sleeve and wash your hands often.

Washing your hands is one of the best things you can do to stop the spread of germs.



Who can I talk to if I have questions?

If you have questions or concerns about stopping the spread of infection, ask your nurse to call Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC).



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