

Nursing Skills

Isolation Droplet Precaution Implementation

Procedure

PROCEDURE STEPS

1. Verify that the patient is placed in a private room, if possible¹⁵
2. Maintain patient isolation by keeping the door to the patient's room closed
3. Attempt to locate the patient with another patient with the same diagnosis, if a private room is unavailable
4. As a last resort, position the patient's bed away from adjacent beds and maintain patient isolation by drawing the curtain surrounding the patient's bed¹⁵
5. Locate an isolation cart stocked with necessary PPE to the anteroom or the area immediately outside the entrance to the patient's room
6. Clinical tip: If a respirator will be worn--a respirator can be required if the patient has a novel influenza type A virus that requires airborne precautions--it is prudent to position a biohazard waste receptacle and alcohol-based hand rub immediately outside the patient's room
7. Place a notice on the isolation card advising of the presence of latex-based items, if applicable. Family members and visitors may use items in the cart
8. Place a sign at the entrance to the patient's room and at strategic locations in the patient's room to notify staff members and visitors that droplet precautions are being observed
9. Delineate specific steps on the sign that should be employed to reduce transmission of the pathogen
10. Include the name of the specific pathogen involved so that non-immunized individuals will not enter the room
11. Perform hand hygiene and don a surgical or isolation mask prior to entering the patient's room⁹
12. Don additional PPE if there is risk for exposure to bodily fluids or contact with contaminated surfaces⁹
13. Don eye protection or an eye shield, according to facility protocol and the risk for exposure to body fluids⁹

14. Don a gown, if indicated
15. Don gloves, if indicated. Pull the wrist of the gloves over the cuffs of the gown
16. Explain details of droplet precautions. Assess the patient's emotional response to the initiation of isolation precautions, and provide emotional support and additional information as appropriate
17. Limit patient movement beyond the confines of the room
18. The patient should perform hand hygiene and don a standard surgical or isolation mask at all times while outside his/her room, if intrahospital/facility transport is necessary¹⁵
19. Educate the patient to adhere to respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette (e.g., cover the mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing/sneezing, dispose of the tissue in a trash receptacle, and perform careful hand hygiene)
20. Educate family members and other visitors about the importance of maintaining droplet precautions, especially the need to wear a surgical or isolation mask and perform careful hand hygiene
21. Assess the patient for psychological effects of being placed on isolation precautions, which can include signs of depression and emotional withdrawal. Be aware that patients react differently to being placed on isolation precautions
22. Discard used materials appropriately and remove and discard PPE, everything but the respirator (if worn), in the patient's room
23. Repeat hand hygiene and don new PPE, if performing patient care to a cohorted patient in the same room

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