

INFECTION CONTROL GUIDELINES FOR PANDEMIC FLU FOR NURSING HOMES AND OTHER RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES



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All healthcare facilities should follow the OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH GUIDELINES FOR PANDEMIC INFLUENZA IN HEALTHCARE SETTINGS.

Put strong measures in place to prevent the virus from entering your building as soon as pandemic flu has been detected in the area.

KNOW THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF PANDEMIC FLU:

- Fever above 100°F or 37.8°C
- Cough or sore throat
- Shortness of breath, difficulty or distress in breathing
- Other symptoms may include:
 - Headache
 - Myalgia
 - Prostration
 - Acute rhinitis (runny nose)
 - Otitis media
 - Nausea and vomiting is more common among children
- Typical flu symptoms, such as fever, may not always be present in
 - Elderly patients
 - Young children
 - Patients in long-term care facilities
 - Persons with underlying chronic illnesses

HAND HYGIENE

- If hands are visibly soiled, wash hands with soap and water.
- If hands are not visibly soiled, use approved alcohol-based products for hand disinfection.
- Always perform hand hygiene between patient contacts and after removing PPE.
- Ensure that resources to facilitate hand hygiene are readily accessible in areas in which patient care is provided.

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ELEMENTS OF RESPIRATORY HYGIENE/COUGH ETIQUETTE:

- Educate healthcare facility staff, patients, and visitors on the importance of containing respiratory secretions.
- Post signs in languages appropriate to the populations served with instructions to patients and accompanying family members or friends to immediately report symptoms of a respiratory infection as directed.
- Source control measures such as covering the mouth/nose with a tissue when coughing and disposing of used tissues; using facemasks on the coughing person when they can be tolerated and are appropriate.
- Hand hygiene after contact with respiratory secretions, and
- Spatial separation, ideally more than 3 feet, of persons with respiratory infections in common waiting areas when possible.

CONTROL VISITORS AND NON-ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL

- Post signs at outside doors telling visitors not to enter if they have been exposed to/or have symptoms of flu:
 - Fever above 100° F or 37.8° C AND
 - Cough and/or sore throat or shortness of breath
- Do not let visitors with flu symptoms enter the building:
 - Have staff members question visitors at the door about exposure to flu and symptoms.
 - Watch visitors:
 - for coughing
 - for trouble breathing
 - for looking sick
- Persons who are well, but at high risk for flu or its complications (e.g., persons with underlying diseases), should be instructed to avoid unnecessary contact with healthcare facilities caring for pandemic flu patients

CONTROL PERSONNEL

- Screen all workers for flu-like symptoms before they come on duty.
- Workers who are sick should be sent home until they are well.

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WATCH PATIENTS FOR SIGNS OF FLU. START CONTROL MEASURES WHEN PANDEMIC INFLUENZA IS IDENTIFIED IN THE FACILITY.

- Keep a close watch on residents for flu-like symptoms. Notify local health department officials with a suspected case.

Droplet precautions and patient placement

- Place patients with known or suspected pandemic flu on droplet precautions for a minimum of 5 days from the onset of symptoms.
 - Immunocompromised patients may shed virus for longer periods and they may be placed on droplet precautions for the duration of their illness.
 - Place patients with pandemic flu in a private room or
 - Cohort with other patients with pandemic flu.
 - If the pandemic virus is associated with diarrhea, contact precautions (i.e., gowns and gloves for all patient contact) should be added.
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- If symptoms of flu are present, follow droplet precautions
 - Do not separate or move patients and roommates out of their rooms unless medically necessary.
 - Cohort residents and staff *on units with known or suspected cases of pandemic influenza.*
 - Discourage movement within the building.
 - Close the dining room while flu is in the building. Serve meals in rooms.
 - Cancel outside appointments unless absolutely necessary.
 - Cancel social and recreational activities.

USE STANDARD PRECAUTIONS FOR

- Dishes and eating utensils
- Disposal of solid waste
- Environmental cleaning and disinfection
- Laboratory specimens
- Linen and laundry
- Patient-care equipment
- Postmortem care

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Cleaning and disinfection after patient discharge or transfer

- Follow standard facility procedures for post-discharge cleaning of an isolation room.
- Clean and disinfect all surfaces that were in contact with the patient or might have become contaminated during patient care. No special treatment is necessary for window curtains, ceilings, and walls unless there is evidence of visible soiling.
- It is not necessary to spray (i.e. fog) occupied or unoccupied rooms with disinfectant.