

What can you do to protect patients during your visit?

- **If you are sick postpone your visit**
- Clean your hands before and after you have contact with a patient
- Do not share items that go into your mouth (utensils, straws etc.)
- Keep your hands away from your mouth, nose and eyes
- STOP and ask a nurse what to do if you see a red STOP sign outside a patient room. Do not enter the room without speaking with a nurse first. Follow the instructions the nurse gives you.
- Use a public washroom, not the washroom in the patient's room
- **Every fall, get the flu shot**



What are some of the risk factors for getting an infection?

Some of the risk factors for getting an infection include:

- Weakened immune system
- Surgery
- Open wounds
- Antibiotic use

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

**For more information on
Respiratory Etiquette and
Hand Hygiene:**

www.health.gov.on.ca/patient_safety

www.handhygiene.ca

www.justcleanyourhands.ca

INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL

Phone: 905 848-7580 x 2990

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Respiratory Etiquette

Protecting
yourself and
others against
respiratory illness



WHAT CAUSES A RESPIRATORY TRACT INFECTION

Respiratory tract infections such as colds, flu or pneumonia are caused by germs (viruses and bacteria)

Fever, new onset of cough or shortness of breath are the most common symptoms of these infections

HOW DO THOSE GERMS SPREAD?

Even if your hands appear to be clean, they may carry germs. Hands pick up microorganisms (germs) in a number of ways.

- When people who are sick sneeze or cough, the germs that are making them sick are expelled into the air in tiny droplets
- If these droplets get onto your face (mouth, eyes, nose) you may get the infection
- If these droplets get onto your hands, and then you touch your mouth, eyes or nose without washing away the germs, you carry the infection
- You can also get sick if you don't wash your hands before and after preparing food, after handling raw meat, and after using the toilet



HOW CAN YOU AVOID SPREADING A RESPIRATORY INFECTION

- When coughing or sneezing turn your head away from others
- Use a tissue to cover your nose and mouth
- If you do not have a tissue cough or sneeze in your sleeve
- Discard tissue in a garbage bin
- Clean your hands often during the day, especially after coughing or blowing your nose
- You may be asked to wear a mask if you have a fever and a cough and/or shortness of breath

WHAT ARE THE STEPS TO PUT ON A MASK?

By wearing a mask, you can avoid spreading your infection to someone else.

- The mask must cover your nose and mouth
- Wear the mask for the entire visit
- Change it if it is wet
- Throw it out into a garbage bin as you are leaving

Steps of putting on surgical mask



1 Tie the upper strings at the top of the head



2 Tie the lower strings at the back of the neck



3 Fix the metallic strip securely over the bridge of the nose



4 Ensure that the mask fully cover the nose, mouth and is stretched gently over the chin and fit snugly over the face



5 Change mask if it becomes moist or damaged

With compliments from SGH

Hand hygiene

Hand hygiene is the most important thing you can do to protect yourself and others

When can an alcohol-based hand sanitizer be used?

Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when hands are not visibly soiled

Alcohol-based hand rubs:

- Provide a rapid kill of most germs
- Contain emollients to reduce hand irritation
- Are less time-consuming than washing with soap and water



When should you use soap and water instead of an alcohol-based product?

Soap and running water remove dirt and grease from hands. This is the best way to clean your hands when they are visibly dirty.

