

# **Infection Prevention and Cystic Fibrosis (CF)**

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## **Why is infection prevention important for cystic fibrosis patients?**

Patients who have cystic fibrosis (CF) are less able to clear bacteria from their lungs. This leads to frequent and severe infections. Some infections are caused by bacteria that are not easily killed by most antibiotics (called multidrug-resistant organisms, or MDROs). Infections with these bacteria are difficult to treat and can be more serious than other infections. For this reason, it is important to learn how they are spread and take precautions to prevent these bacteria from infecting you.

## **How do bacteria and other germs spread among CF patients in the hospital?**

Germs can spread by:

- Staff members not washing their hands after coming into direct contact with mouth or nose fluids, or with unclean surfaces or objects
- Patients touching unclean surfaces or equipment
- Being near someone when they cough or sneeze

To help prevent you from coming into contact with germs that can cause illness during your time in the hospital, you will be in Contact Precautions. This means staff will wear a gown and gloves whenever they are in your room.

## **How can I help prevent the spread of bacteria and other germs?**

### **Wash your hands**

Cleansing your hands is one of the most important things you and your family can do to prevent illness. Wash your hands regularly, especially during these times:

- Before eating

- Before, during, and after handling or preparing food
- After you use the bathroom
- After touching something that could have germs (such as a trash can, cleaning cloth, drain, or dirt)
- After sneezing, coughing, or blowing your nose
- When someone in your home is sick
- Whenever you visit someone in the hospital or nursing home

**Wear masks**

Mask use is another way to prevent infection. You must wear a mask whenever you are in our hospital. The only exceptions for this rule are while you are in your inpatient room, in a clinic exam room, and during pulmonary function testing.

**Keep your distance from other CF patients**

To avoid coming into contact with bacteria and other germs from other CF patients, try to stay at least 6 feet away from them.

**Clean your respiratory therapy equipment**

Always completely follow the instructions you've received to clean all of your respiratory therapy equipment. Bacteria and other germs can collect on your respiratory therapy equipment and infect you or others. Making sure that your equipment is cleaned properly will help prevent bacteria and other germs from infecting you.

Thank you for your help with infection prevention and control.

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