

Routine Practices in Continuing Care

Routine Practices help prevent the spread of infections. These practices apply when interacting with residents whether in Alberta Health Services (AHS) facilities or community settings. Use Routine Practices for every resident, every time, regardless of their diagnosis or infectious status.

	<h3><u>Point of Care Risk Assessment (PCRA)</u></h3> <p>Before providing care to any resident, assess the risk of spreading infection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note any possible contact you may have with blood or body fluids (e.g., coughing, bleeding, runny nose, or soiled clothing, equipment or environment); AND Put on the correct personal protective equipment (PPE), if needed, before providing care.
	<h3><u>Hand Hygiene</u>: the single most important step in preventing infections</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform hand hygiene using alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) or soap and water. Use ABHR for hand hygiene unless hands are visibly soiled. Use plain soap and water when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> hands are visibly soiled caring for residents with diarrhea and/or vomiting Keep finger nails natural, clean, healthy and short. Depending on where you work, there may be restrictions on artificial nails or jewelry. Check the AHS Hand Hygiene Policy for more information. Use only AHS or facility approved ABHR, soap, and hand lotion. Follow the steps for performing hand hygiene found in the AHS Hand Hygiene Procedure. Perform hand hygiene: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> before taking gloves from a box to put on before contact with a resident or resident's environment before a clean or aseptic procedure after exposure or risk of exposure to blood or body fluids after contact with a resident or resident's environment immediately after removal of gloves Show residents and visitors how and discuss when to use hand hygiene products.
	<h3><u>Respiratory Hygiene</u>: Cover Your Cough, Clean Your Hands</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Use the tissue once then dispose of it immediately and perform hand hygiene. If tissues are not readily available, cough or sneeze into your upper arm or elbow. 
	<h3><u>Personal Protective Equipment: Gloves</u></h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gloves are single-use. Use only once, then dispose of them immediately after use. Wear new non-sterile gloves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to help protect your hands from contact with blood, body fluids, excretions, secretions, mucous membranes or non-intact skin of residents to handle dirty or potentially contaminated items to protect your hands if you have non-intact skin (e.g. open cuts, lesions or rashes) Perform hand hygiene before accessing and putting gloves on AND immediately after taking gloves off. Change gloves between care activities for the same resident (e.g., when moving from a contaminated body site to a clean body site). Do not wear gloves outside resident rooms or bed spaces unless carrying contaminated items or when cleaning spills of blood or body fluids. Never wash disposable gloves or use ABHR on any gloves. Sterile gloves are for sterile procedures. Gloves are not necessary when feeding a resident, touching somebody in a social manner, pushing a wheelchair, delivering meals, handling clean supplies, or providing care to residents with intact skin. <p>(Refer to the AHS Donning and Doffing PPE posters for details on correct removal and disposal of gloves).</p>

Personal Protective Equipment: Gowns



- Wear a gown to protect exposed skin and clothing during activities likely to cause:
 - splashes of fluids
 - contact with blood or body fluids (e.g., wound drainage)
 - Perform [hand hygiene](#) before accessing and putting on and immediately after taking off a gown.
 - Fasten the tie strings at the neck and the waist.
 - Make sure the sleeves cover your wrists.
 - Never use gowns as housecoats or warm-up jackets.
 - Do not wear gowns outside resident rooms or bed spaces unless carrying contaminated items or when cleaning contaminated items.
 - Remove damaged or heavily soiled gowns as soon as possible.
 - Do not reuse gowns.
 - After removing gown:
 - place in waste container if disposable
 - place in linen bag if reusable
 - perform [hand hygiene](#)
- (Refer to the [AHS Donning and Doffing PPE posters](#) for details on correct removal and disposal of gowns).



Personal Protective Equipment: Masks and Eye Protection



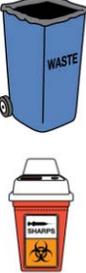
- If you need a mask, you also need eye protection (e.g., goggles, face shields, visors attached to masks).
 - Wear a mask and eye protection to protect your mouth, nose and eyes during activities likely to spray or splash you with blood or body fluids.
 - Perform [hand hygiene](#) before accessing and putting on, and immediately after taking off mask and eye protection.
 - Proper wearing of a mask includes:
 - ensuring a snug fit over the nose and under the chin
 - molding the metal bar over the nose
 - wearing the mask with the moisture-absorbing side closest to the face
 - changing the mask when it is moist
 - correct removal after use, touching only the elastic or ties
 - Prescription glasses do not meet Workplace Health and Safety Regulations for eye protection.
 - Clean and disinfect re-useable eye protection after each use.
 - Discard single-use masks and eye protection in waste container.
- (Refer to the [AHS Donning and Doffing PPE posters](#) for details on correct removal and disposal of masks and eye protection).



Handling Resident Care Items and Equipment



- Discard items labeled as single-use after use on one resident.
- Clean and disinfect reusable equipment after use, before use on another resident.
- Bring minimal supplies into resident rooms, tub rooms, and treatment rooms.
- Do not share personal items (e.g., soaps, lotions, razors) between residents.
- Use non-sterile gloves when handling soiled items, equipment, linens (correct PPE may also include a gown).
- Handle soiled or used linens with minimal agitation and place directly in linen bag at point of care, without sorting. Do not overfill bags. Double bag only if leaking.
- After residents are discharged, discard single-use supplies that remain in resident's room and launder unused linens.
- Used meal trays and beverage dishes do not require special handling. Place on the dietary cart or in an area designated for used dishes. Disposable dishes and utensils are not required.

	<h3>Environmental Cleaning</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean resident care areas on a regularly scheduled basis and after resident discharge or transfer. • Use AHS or facility approved products and procedures. • Refer to Environmental Services cleaning schedules and practices.
	<h3>Resident Ambulation Outside Room, Bed Space or Transfer</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before residents leave their room, educate or assist them with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ performing hand hygiene ○ performing respiratory hygiene if coughing or sneezing ○ putting on clean clothing or clean housecoat ○ ensuring dressings and incontinence products are able to contain any drainage • Transport Staff should assess the risk of spreading infection and choose the correct personal protective equipment to wear.
	<h3>Visitors</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruct visitors (family, friends, private caregivers, etc.) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ perform hand hygiene upon entry into and exit from the facility ○ practice respiratory hygiene while visiting ○ reschedule visits when feeling unwell ○ contact facility staff if providing direct care to a resident <div style="text-align: right;">   </div>
	<h3>Waste and Sharps Handling</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear gloves to remove waste from resident rooms, common care rooms (e.g., resident tub rooms) and if the outside of bag is soiled. • Avoid contact with body. • Remove gloves and perform hand hygiene. • Remember: New Needle, New Syringe, Every Time! • Dispose of sharps immediately after use in puncture-proof biohazard container. • Do not overfill waste or sharps container. • Follow facility waste management sorting and disposal guidelines. <div style="text-align: right;">   </div>