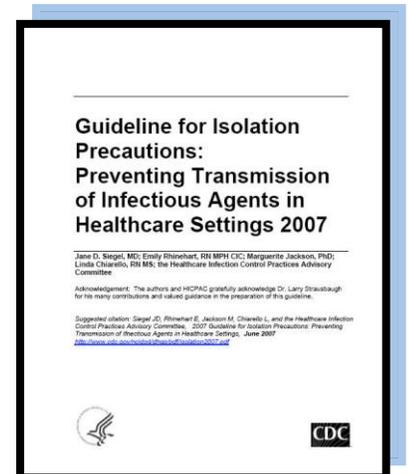


2007 CDC Isolation Precaution Guidelines (9/07)

Siegel JD, Rhinehart E, Jackson M, Chiarello L, and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee. Guideline for isolation precautions: preventing transmission of infectious agents in healthcare settings, 2007:1–219.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently released an update to the 1996 *Guideline for Isolation Precautions in Hospitals*. The new guideline updates and expands the isolation precautions it recommends for a wide spectrum of health-care delivery settings including not only hospitals, but also ambulatory care, long-term care, home care and infusion services, as well as special environments such as pediatrics, intensive care units, and burn units. In the 2007 guideline, the term “nosocomial infections” is replaced by “health-care associated infections” (HAIs) to reflect the changing patterns in health-care delivery. The guideline also addresses the emergence of new pathogens (e.g., severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus [SARS-CoV] associated with SARS, Avian influenza in humans) and bioterrorism issues. Standard Precautions, first recommended in the 1996 CDC guideline, remain the foundation of infection prevention for patients and health-care personnel. New additions to the recommendations for Standard Precautions are Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette and safe injection practices. The need for a recommendation for Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette grew out of observations during the SARS outbreaks where failure to implement simple source control measures with patients, visitors, and health-care personnel with respiratory symptoms may have contributed to SARS-CoV transmission. The new CDC guideline also provides more focus on administrative support of infection control programs, in particular the importance of infection control and staffing levels. The primary objective of the guideline is to improve the safety of the nation’s health-care delivery system by reducing the rates of HAIs.



DECS Comment: Standard Precautions are still considered to be the foundation for all dental infection control programs. It is important for dental health-care personnel (DHCP) to be aware of the revised isolation precaution guidelines because the CDC document also discusses transmission based precautions that might be necessary to prevent potential spread of certain diseases (e.g., tuberculosis [TB], influenza, and varicella) that are transmitted through airborne, droplet, or contact transmission (e.g., sneezing, coughing, and contact with skin). When acutely ill with these diseases, patients do not usually seek routine dental outpatient care; however we still need to be aware of additional precautions that would be indicated if it becomes necessary to treat this type of patient in the dental clinic. Necessary additional precautions might include patient placement (e.g., isolation), adequate room ventilation, respiratory protection (e.g., N-95 masks) for DHCP, or postponement of nonemergency dental procedures. Information that can be used in your facility to incorporate respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, now considered to be a part of Standard Precautions, can be found by visiting the CDC Web site at www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/pdf/Infdis/RespiratoryPoster.pdf and www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm. The CDC Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings 2007 is available by visiting www.cdc.gov/hicpac/pubs.html.