

preventable if caregivers practice meticulous cleaning and disposal techniques.

Standard Precautions synthesize the major features of universal (blood and body fluid) precautions (designed to reduce the risk of transmission of blood-borne pathogens) and body substance isolation (designed to reduce the risk of transmission of pathogens from moist body substances). Standard Precautions involve the use of barrier protection (personal protective equipment [PPE]), such as gloves, goggles, gowns, and masks, to prevent contamination from blood; all body fluids, secretions, and excretions, except sweat, regardless of whether they contain visible blood; nonintact skin; and mucous membranes. Standard Precautions are designed for the care of all patients to reduce the risk of transmission of microorganisms from both recognized and unrecognized sources of infection.

In 2007, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended adding Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette and safe injection practices to Standard Precautions. Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette stresses the importance of source control measures to contain respiratory secretions to prevent droplet and fomite transmission of viral respiratory tract infections, such as respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), influenza, and adenovirus ([Siegel, Rhinehart, Jackson, et al, 2007](#)). Safe injection practices involve the use of safety-engineered sharp devices to prevent sharps injury as a component of Standard Precautions.

Hand hygiene continues to be the single most important practice to reduce the transmission of infectious diseases in health care settings ([Siegel, Rhinehart, Jackson, et al, 2007](#)). Hand hygiene includes hand washing with soap and water, as well as the use of alcohol-based products for hand disinfection.

Transmission-Based Precautions are designed for patients with documented or suspected infection or colonization (presence of microorganisms in or on patient but without clinical signs and symptoms of infection) with highly transmissible or epidemiologically important pathogens for which additional precautions beyond Standard Precautions are needed to interrupt transmission in hospitals. The three types of Transmission-Based Precautions are (1) Airborne Precautions, (2) Droplet Precautions, and (3) Contact Precautions. They may be combined for diseases