

Infection Prevention and Control Tips for Visiting All Health Care Settings

Transcript

February 2023

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This presentation, *Infection Prevention and Control Tips for Visiting All Health Care Settings*, contains practical, up-to-date guidance that visitors will need to understand and follow when visiting a care setting in order to protect themselves, the person they are visiting, and others from getting an infection.

Such care settings may include long-term care homes, retirement homes, hospitals, group homes, shelters, social services, as well as home care and community care.

This presentation is relevant for families, friends and loved ones of those living in care settings, as well as the patients and residents of the care settings themselves.

Attached to this presentation, you will also find links to related resources for further learning on this topic.

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Learning Objectives

By the end of this presentation, you will:

- Know why Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) is important when visiting a care setting.
- Be able to use basic Infection Prevention and Control practices to keep yourself, those you are visiting, and others safe from germs that can make you sick.

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By the end of this presentation, you will:

- Know why following Infection Prevention and Control is important when visiting a variety of care settings.
- Be able to follow basic Infection Prevention and Control practices to keep yourself, those you are visiting, and others safe from germs that can make you sick.

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What Is Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC)?

Things we can do to stop or lessen **the risk of spreading harmful germs** (infections that can make you sick) from person to person.



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So, what exactly *is* Infection Prevention and Control?




Often called “IPAC” for short, Infection Prevention and Control are things we can do to prevent or decrease the risk of spreading harmful germs (or infections that can make you sick) from person-to-person.

IPAC practices are known to work and are backed up by science.

When followed, they help keep you and others safe and healthy.

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Examples of IPAC Practices (1 of 2)

<p>Cleaning Your Hands</p> 	<p>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</p> 	<p>Screening</p> 
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Examples of important IPAC practices include:

- Cleaning your hands to get rid of any germs on them
- Wearing Personal Protective Equipment (often referred to as PPE). This includes medical masks, gloves, gowns, as well as protection for your eyes and face.
- Following screening which helps identify those who may be infected so that infection control practices can be put in place.

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Examples of IPAC Practices (2 of 2)

Getting Vaccinated	Staying Informed	Other Important Practices
		

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Getting vaccinated to boost your body's ability to fight off germs. This is also called "getting immunized"

- Stay informed about IPAC and other things you must know before you visit. This is even more important when there has been an outbreak of infection in the care setting.
- We will go over each of these in more detail as well as other important practices you may be need to follow for safe visiting, such as keeping physical distance from others during your visit.

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Okay, let's talk about cleaning your hands, also known as hand hygiene, in more detail.

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Why is Cleaning Your Hands Important?

- Keeps your hands clean, healthy, and germ-free
- Protects yourself and others from harmful germs
- Important for **everyone!**



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- Cleaning your hands is important because it keeps your hands clean, healthy, and germ-free.
- Cleaning your hands helps to keep us safe from harmful germs and also prevents us from spreading harmful germs to others.
- This practice is important for everyone, whatever their role is or the kind of setting they are in.

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When Should You Clean Your Hands? (1 of 2)

Before entering and after leaving building	Before entering and after leaving bed space	Before and after providing care
		


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You should always clean your hands when your hands could have gotten harmful germs on them. This includes:

- Before entering and after leaving the building of the care setting
- Before entering and after leaving the bed space or room of the person you are visiting
- Before and after giving care for another person, such as feeding, bathing, helping someone in the bathroom, dressing, or putting on a bandage

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When Should You Clean Your Hands? (2 of 2)

Before and after touching your face	When your hands are visibly dirty	Before and after personal care
		

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- Before and after touching your face. This includes touching your face to put on or take off a mask or eye protection.
- When your hands have dirt you can see on them, including after coming into contact with bodily fluids such as saliva, blood, or vomit.
- Before and after your own care tasks such using the washroom, blowing your nose, or sneezing or coughing into a tissue, your sleeve, or your hands.

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When Should You Clean Your Hands?

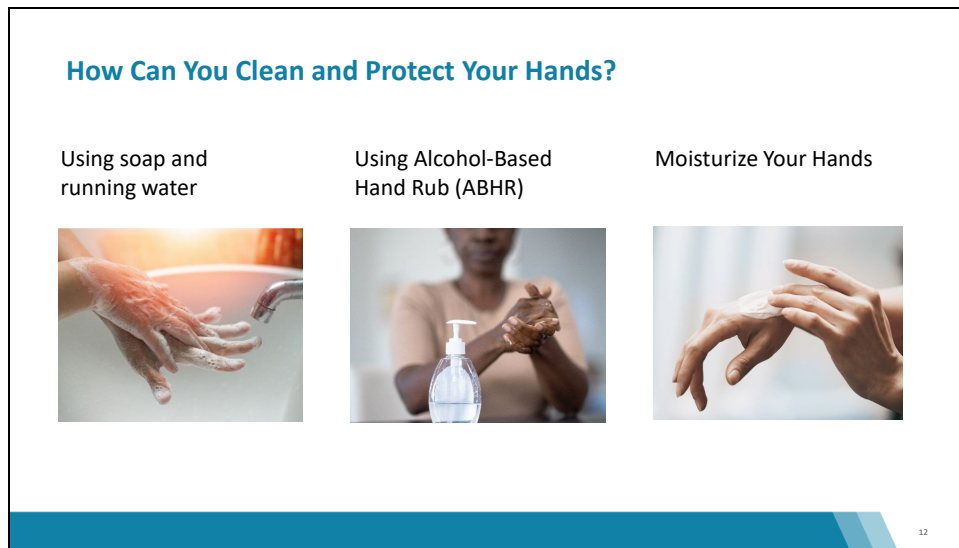
- Gloves **do not** replace cleaning your hands.
- **Always** clean your hands before and after using PPE, including gloves.



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- It is important to stress that gloves should never replace cleaning your hands.
- You should *always* clean your hands before and after using any type of personal protective equipment, including gloves!

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It is very important to clean and protect your hands the correct way. There are two main ways to clean your hands.

- The first way, is using soap and running water.
- The second way, is using alcohol-based hand rub, or “ABHR” for short. This is commonly called hand sanitizer.
- You should use one way to clean your hands rather than both. In other words, do not clean with soap and water and then sanitizer right after (or vice versa) as this may dry out your hands.
- When possible, use the sanitizer or soap provided by the setting you are visiting.
- For both ways to clean your hands, scrub your hands for at least 15 seconds. This is about the time it takes to hum the “happy birthday” song twice from beginning to end.
- Be sure to rub all the surfaces of your hands and fingers, including the top of your hands.
- For more resources that offer a step-by-step demonstration of the correct way to clean your hands using each way, check out the video and print resource links in the description below this presentation.
- After cleaning your hands using either way, it is important to moisturize your hands in order to avoid dry or cracked skin where harmful germs can enter.
- It is best to use scent-free products with skin softeners called emollients.
- You should also avoid sharing moisturizers with others and,
- Use a product from a pump dispenser rather than a tub or tube to avoid the transfer of germs

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Now that you have learned about proper hand cleaning, we'll learn more about personal protective equipment.

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What is Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)?

- Provides barrier against harmful germs
- Protects eyes, nose, mouth, skin
- May be required when visiting a person in a health care setting

Always check with the setting about specific PPE requirements



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- Personal Protective Equipment, or “PPE” for short, provides a physical separation between yourself and harmful germs.
- PPE protects your eyes, nose, mouth, skin, and clothing from exposure to germs in blood, bodily fluids, sprays, or splashes.
- If you are visiting someone in a care setting, you may have to wear specific types of PPE if you will do tasks that expose you or the other person to harmful germs or if the person has a specific infection that could be spread to you
- The types of PPE you will need to wear will depend on the person you are visiting and the type of activity you will be doing.
- In some cases, there may be a sign posted on the door or bed space of the person you are visiting, which tells you that additional IPAC practices are needed (such as the use of specific PPE).
- Remember, always check with the care setting for things that you may need to know about before you visit, or for guidance on how to put on and take off PPE correctly if you are unsure.

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What are the Different Types of PPE for? (1 of 2)

Medical Masks

- Protect your nose and mouth from harmful germs
- Protects others from your germs (universal masking)

Gloves

- Protects your hands from germs



The image shows a blue surgical mask with white ear loops and a blue nitrile glove being worn on a hand. The mask is positioned above the hand, and the glove is shown from the side, highlighting its texture and fit.

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Let's go over some different types of PPE and what they are for.

- Medical masks can be worn as PPE to protect your nose and mouth from harmful germs from others or to protect others from your germs in case you are sick but don't know it yet.
- Wearing masks at all times to protect others is often referred to as 'universal masking'.
- Masks should cover your nose *and* mouth
- You should not touch your face when wearing it and replace it with a new one if it becomes damp or dirty.
- Gloves are worn to protect your hands from harmful germs such as those that might be in body fluids. Remember, you should *always* clean your hands before AND after wearing gloves.

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What are the Different Types of PPE for? (2 of 2)



Gowns

- Protects your clothes and skin from harmful germs



Eye Protection

- Protects your eyes and face from harmful germs
- Goggles, face shield, visor


- Gowns are worn to protect your clothes and exposed skin from harmful germs
- Eye protection such as goggles, a face shield or a mask with an attached visor protects your eyes and face from harmful germs in droplets in the air or other fluids. Eye protection should protect your eyes from all sides. Prescription glasses are not eye protection. Use goggles, face shield or visor.

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How Do I Use PPE Correctly?

Putting on, wearing, taking off PPE must be done **correctly** and in a **specific order**.

Check out the resources to learn more



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- Putting on, wearing, and taking off PPE must be done correctly and in a certain order to prevent getting harmful germs on your hands or skin, from your PPE.
- You can visit links to print and video resources in the description below this presentation for a step-by-step demonstration of how to put on, wear, and take off masks and full PPE correctly.

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We've covered a lot of information about PPE. Next, we'll go over screening, another important IPAC practice.


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What is Screening?


Reading a list of health questions



Being asked health questions directly



Having a lab test, such as a swab



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- Screening gives us information about who may have an infection (with or without feeling sick), or those who may be at risk of one so that infection control practices can be put in place to keep others safe. Screening can include:
- Reading and answering a list of questions about your health.
- Being asked questions about your health from a health care staff directly.
- Having a lab test, such as a swab


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How do I Self-Screen Before Visiting?

Check for symptoms of infection, such as:

- Coughing
- Sore throat
- Fever
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea



 If you are feeling unwell, **do not visit.**

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Before you visit anyone in a care setting, do a self-screening to check if you any symptoms of an infection such as:

- Coughing
- Sore throat
- Fever
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- If you are feeling unwell, do not visit.

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What Happens If Someone Screens Positive?



Those Receiving Care

- May be moved to a single room
- May be asked to stay in their room
- May need to wear PPE to have visitors

Visitors

- May be asked not to visit, or reschedule
- May require PPE to visit

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- A positive screen gives us information about what to do to keep ourselves and others safe.
- Those receiving care (such as patients or residents in the care setting) who have a positive screen for an infection (for example, they have a cough or a sore throat):
 - May be moved to a single room
 - May be asked to stay in their room
 - May need specific PPE for themselves and visitors (or anyone entering their room)
- Visitors, who have screened positive for infection
 - May be asked to not visit, or to visit when they are no longer sick, or
 - May require specific PPE to visit


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Next, we'll talk about vaccines, another important IPAC practice.

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How Can Getting Vaccinated Keep Me and Others Safe?



- Safe and helpful way to boost your body's ability to fight infections
- Available for infections such as:
 - Measles
 - The Flu (Influenza)
 - Hepatitis
 - COVID-19

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- Vaccines, (which are often called immunizations) are one of the safest and most effective ways to boost your body's ability to fight off harmful germs to stop infections.
- Getting vaccinated will help protect yourself from some infections and from spreading them to others

Vaccines are available for many serious infections such as:

- measles, the flu (influenza)
- hepatitis and
- COVID-19

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How Do I Protect Those at Higher Risk of Getting an Infection?



People with a weak immune system may include:

- People getting cancer treatment
- People with a disease (HIV, diabetes)
- Elderly people

Get your vaccines before visiting someone with a weak immune system

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Those you are visiting may have weakened immune systems and may not get the full protective effects of vaccines. You may have heard this being called “immunocompromised”

People with a weakened immune system may include:

- People receiving cancer treatment
- People with a disease (such as HIV or diabetes,) and *or*
- Elderly people
- It is important to get vaccinated before visiting someone who has a weakened immune system so that you do not spread harmful germs to those who are at risk of serious health problems from an infection
- Always follow public health guidelines for recommended vaccinations based on your age, health status and previous vaccinations you’ve received.

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Now that you know how vaccines work as an IPAC practice, we'll go over how to stay up-to-date with IPAC information before your visit.

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How Can I Stay Informed Before I Visit?



- Learn about safety practices that may affect your visit
- Find out what to do if there is an outbreak
- Look out for messages from the setting, talk to staff, check their website
- Get up-to-date information from:
 - Your Local Public Health Unit
 - Public Health Ontario
 - The Government of Ontario

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- It is important to know the safety practices that the care setting has put in place, that may affect your visit.
- Special infection prevention and control practices may be used when there is an outbreak. This means more people with infections than usual in the care setting you are planning to visit or in the community population at large.
- Look out for announcements from the care setting, and if you have questions or need more information about what you need to do to help prevent and control the spread of infections, check with the staff or check their website before your visit.
- You can also find the most up-to-date information about IPAC, infections, vaccinations and more on the websites of your local Public Health Unit, Public Health Ontario, and the Government of Ontario.

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With that in mind, let's go over some other best practices to follow for safe visiting, which you should use at all times to help prevent the spread of infection.

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Are there Other Best Practices I Should Follow When I Visit?

Do	Do Not
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Keep at least 2 meters (6 feet) from others✓ Follow all instructions from the care setting about the use of PPE and cleaning your hands✓ Check with staff if you have questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Bring items that you do not need while visiting✗ Provide care to anyone other than who you are visiting✗ Share items or food with other patients, residents, staff, or other visitors✗ Visit if you are feeling sick

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Here are some things you *should* do:

Do - keep at least 2 meters (or 6 feet) of physical distance from others while you are visiting. This is about the length of two outstretched arms. This is especially important when you are unmasked during activities such as eating or smoking. Remember, you or the person you are visiting may be able to spread harmful germs even if you don't feel sick.

Do – Follow specific instructions from the care setting about the use of PPE or cleaning your hands.

Do – Check with the staff at the care setting if you have questions or need more information about what you need to do help prevent and control the spread of infections.

Here are some things you *should not* do:

Do not bring items that you don't need while visiting. Any items you bring in are at risk of getting harmful germs on them.

Do not assist or provide care to anyone aside from the person you are visiting. The more people you have contact with, the more likely you will pick up harmful germs and pass them on to others.

Do not share items or food with other patients, residents, staff, or other visitors. Food can be a way of passing on harmful germs, especially food that is being shared among people.

And finally,

Do not visit if you are feeling sick or unwell.

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Resources

Public Health Ontario

- Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). How to hand rub [video recording]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2021 [cited 2022 Dec 28]. 1 min. Available from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Videos/I/2020/IPAC-Handrub>
- Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). How to hand wash [video recording]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2021 [cited 2022 Dec 28]. 2 min. Available from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Videos/I/2021/IPAC-Handwash>
- Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). How to hand wash [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2009 [cited 2022 Dec 28]. Available from: https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/I/2009/jcyh-handwash.pdf?rev=856d221523314b2495b5f49b31360c3c&sc_lang=en
- Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). How to hand rub [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2009 [cited 2022 Dec 28]. Available from: https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/I/2009/jcyh-handrub.pdf?rev=87165b8a22cc41948bb49a3128743906&sc_lang=en

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If you would like more information, please see the list of resources here.

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Resources (cont'd)

- Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Putting on PPE [video recording]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2021 [cited 2022 Dec 28]. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NvrJlOp-abo>
- Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Taking off PPE [video recording]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2021 [cited 2022 Dec 28]. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Go3u37-dRB4>
- Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Putting on and taking off PPE [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2020 [cited 2022 Dec 28]. Available from: https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/nCoV/ipac/ppe-recommended-steps.pdf?rev=dd50016544ee4482a6afacd8b374dee7&sc_lang=en

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For More Information About This Presentation

Email us at:

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Don't forget to check out the resources below this presentation.

Public Health Ontario keeps Ontarians safe and healthy. Find out more at [PublicHealthOntario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca/public-health)

Ontario 

We have reached the end of the presentation, Infection Prevention and Control Tips for Visiting All Health Care Settings.

We encourage you to use this resource whenever you need to, along with the resources linked in the description below this presentation. This includes a printable fact sheet that gives key information from this presentation.

For more information about this presentation, you can contact the infection prevention and control department at Public Health Ontario by emailing ipac@oahpp.ca.

Thank you for joining and thank you for doing your part to keep everyone safe.