



Ambulatory Clinic Policy and Procedure

Title: STANDARD PRECAUTIONS AND TRANSMISSION BASED PRECAUTIONS	Policy Number: EP 7.2
Regulation APIC, CDC, OSHA Reference:	Effective Date: 01/2025

Policy Statement:

It is the policy of Texas Tech Physicians of El Paso (TTP-EP) to control and reduce the risk of transmission of pathogens including bloodborne pathogens within the ambulatory clinics.

Scope and Distribution:

This policy applies and will be distributed to all Texas Tech Physicians of El Paso ambulatory clinics.

Review:

The appointed Infection Preventionist, in consultation with the Infection Prevention and Control Committee Members, will review this TTP EP Policy on June 1 of every even-numbered year.

Procedure:

1. **Standard Precautions:** a set of elements intended to protect and prevent Healthcare Personnel (HCP) and the environment from transmitting infections to other patients. It is based on the use of common sense practices and using personal protective equipment to protect HCP from infection and prevent the spread of infection from patient to patient.
 - a. **Hand Hygiene (HH):** the practice of using either using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) to reduce the transmission of healthcare-associated pathogens. This task will follow the process outlined in EP 7.16 on Hand Hygiene.
 - i. TTP EP will ensure that HH dispensers are readily accessible outside in areas where patient care is delivered and in compliance with life safety codes.
 - b. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** equipment that will be worn to protect HCP from exposure to or contact with infectious agents.
 - i. Gowns, masks, and goggles are to be worn during procedures involving more extensive contact with blood or body fluids. (i.e., endoscopic procedures, dental procedures, procedures that may involve blood spattering)
 - ii. HCP will have access to and be trained on how to select, put on, remove, and dispose of PPE in a manner that protects themselves, the patient, and others.
 - c. **Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette:** visual alerts placed throughout TTP EP facilities instructing patients and visitors to inform HCP of symptoms of a respiratory infection when they first register.



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- i. Signage will provide tips on preventing the spread of germs from coughing and demonstrate donning and removing personal protective equipment.
- d. **Environment Cleaning, Disinfecting and Handling:** TTP EP will use Environmental Protective Agency's registered disinfectants in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
 - i. High touch surfaces will be cleaned/disinfected on a more frequent schedule than minimal touch surfaces.
 - ii. Clean walls, blinds, and curtains in patient-care areas when they are visibly dusty or soiled.
 - iii. Items contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious materials, will be cleaned or properly disposed of immediately in containers that are not readily accessible to patients or visitors.
 - iv. Use a sealable plastic bag with, "biohazard" label, to transport blood or body fluids or tissue specimens.
- e. **Safe Injection Practices:** will use accepted practices to prevent transmission of infectious disease between one patient and another, or between a patient and a HCP.
 - i. **Do not**; reuse a syringe; administer single-dose medications to more than one patient; recap contaminated needles under any circumstances.
 - ii. Dispose of needles as described in policy EP 7.17 Handling Disposing of Needles Sharps, into a Sharps Container.
2. **Transmission-Based Precautions:** are second tier precautions to be used in addition to Standard Precautions for patients who may be infected or colonized with certain infectious agents (e.g., diarrhea, rash, respiratory symptoms, draining wounds or lesions) and based on the mode of transmission of the specific pathogen:
 - a. **Airborne Precautions:** for patients known or suspected to be infected with a pathogen that can be transmitted by airborne route including but not limited to: tuberculosis, measles, and chickenpox/varicella (until lesion crusted).
 - i. PPE – place surgical mask over patient as soon as patient enters facility with instructions to keep it on at all times. HCP should wear an N-95 mask/respirator.
 - b. **Droplet Precautions:** for patients known or suspected to be infected with a pathogen transmitted by respiratory droplets generated by coughing, sneezing, or talking. Can include but not limited to: Influenza, Adenovirus, Respiratory Syncytial Virus or Pertussis.
 - i. PPE – place surgical mask over patient. HCP should don a surgical mask prior to close contact (within 3- feet) of the patient.

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- ii. Patients on Droplet Precautions who must be transported outside of the room must wear a mask if tolerated and follow Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette.
- c. **Contact Precautions:** for patients that present with; incontinence of stool, draining wounds, copious secretions, pressure ulcers, ostomy and/or tubes with draining fluids.
 - i. PPE – gloves will be worn when touching the patient and touching the patient's immediate environment or belongings.
 - ii. Gowns will be worn if substantial and prolonged contact is anticipated.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016, September). *Guide to Infection Prevention for Outpatient Settings: Minimum Expectations for Safe Care*. Retrieved from Infection Control outpatient guide: <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/pdf/outpatient/guide.pdf>

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