

Infection Control during Your Clinical Attachment

Student Occupational Health Committee

Because a wide range of antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections have been reported, including at hospitals in Tokyo, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology are attempting to more actively deal with the issue of hospital acquired infections.

Medical students, therefore, are also required to follow the rules set for medical practitioners, especially in bedside teaching, where they are likely to be in contact with physicians and patients.

Accordingly, follow the standard precautions below, while in school, at hospitals, and during practical trainings, just as teaching staff do.

Standard precautions

Standard precautions are based on the idea that regardless of suspected or confirmed infection status of the patient, every patient's moist body substances, except sweat, i.e. , blood, body fluid, secretions, excrement, damaged skin, and all kinds of mucous membranes, must be treated as potentially infectious. Standard precautions include: hand hygiene, use of gloves for injections, appropriate use of other personal protective equipment, safe handling of potentially contaminated equipment or surfaces in the patient environment, including the bed linen, preventative measures for needlestick injuries, respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette, safe injection practices, and infection control measures for lumbar puncture.

(CDC Guideline for Isolation Precautions in Hospitals 2007)

When examining a patient, appropriate infection control measures based on standard precautions are required. Moreover, when examining patients already known to have infections, appropriate infection control measures, including investigation of the source of infection, must be performed. Medical students must also follow these measures in any medical setting, including when they see patients during bedside teaching or visit the hospitals or other institutions' facilities.

It is essential to follow the minimum infection prevention practices below.

Finally, respect hygiene practices even in everyday situations, such as before meals and after using the restroom. If you have a flu-like symptom, such as coughing or sneezing, make sure you wear a surgical mask to prevent the spread of infection both inside and outside the school.

1. Hand hygiene

1) Washing hands

Wash your hands when they are visibly unclean or soiled by protein substances, blood, or other kinds of body fluids.

2) Hand decontamination

Perform alcohol-based rubbing of your hands, if they are not visibly soiled.

3) Key situations in which hand hygiene should be performed include the following, which also apply to students who are not directly involved in medical practices):

i) Before and after directly touching a patient

ii) After touching the patient's healthy skin (such as for measuring heart rate and blood pressure and moving the patient)

iii) After contact with blood, body fluids, or excretions or after wound dressing

iv) If hands will be moving from a contaminated body site to a clean body site during patient care

v) After touching the patient's immediate environment (including bed, table, curtain, and medical equipment)

vi) Before and after wearing gloves

2. Respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette

1) Cover your mouth with tissues or your antecubital fossa (elbow pit) when coughing or sneezing

2) Wash your hands after they cover your mouth

3) If you have symptoms of respiratory infections, such as coughing or fever, wear a surgical mask

3. Avoiding recapping needles

1) Recapping needles is prohibited. Gloves must also be worn when dealing with needles.

Health management before bedside learning

1) fever, 2) diarrhoea, 3) nausea / vomiting, 4) coughing, 5) sense of fatigue, 6) skin rash

If you have any of these symptoms, see a physician before the bedside learning, and contact the Student Affairs Division and as the clinical department chosen for the training.

● Infection Diseases and Isolation Precaution 1

Infectious diseases	Department / Division	Restrictions	Restrictions apply until
Pulmonary tuberculosis	Respiratory Medicine / Infection Control and Prevention / General Medicine	Do not come to school	Your are proved to be noninfectious
E p i d e m i c keratoconjunctivitis	Ophthalmology	Do not come to school	The symptoms disappear (2-3 weeks)
Acute hemorrhagic conjunctivitis	Ophthalmology	Do not come to school	The symptoms disappear (one week after symptom appears)
Measles	Dermatology / Infectious Diseases / General Medicine	Do not come to school	Temperature has lowered and 4 days have passed since the rash first appeared
Mumps (epidemic parotitis)	Infection Control and Prevention / General Medicine / Otorhinology / Urology	Do not come to school	9 days after swelling appears
Rubella	Dermatology / Infection Control and Prevention / General Medicine	Do not come to school	5 days after rash appears
Chickenpox	Dermatology / Infection Control and Prevention / General Medicine	Do not come to school	All the lesions are dry and have turned into scabs

● Infection Diseases and Isolation Precaution 2

Infectious diseases	Department / Division	Restrictions	Restrictions apply until
Herpes zoster (local)	Dermatology	Avoid contact with high-risk patients	All the lesions are dry and have turned into scabs
Herpes zoster (general)		Do not come to school	All the lesions are dry and have turned into scabs
Influenza	Infection Control and Prevention / General Medicine	Do not come to school	5 days have passed since it started and 2 days have passed since the temperature has decreased
Herpes simplex virus (hands)	Dermatology	Do not come to school	Full recovery
Herpes simplex virus (lips)		Avoid contact with patients	
Scabies	Dermatology	Avoid contact with high-risk patients	Judged safe depending on treatment duration and speed of recovery
I n f e c t i o u s gastroenteritis	Infection Control and Prevention / General Medicine	Do not come to school	24 hours after the symptoms have disappeared
Hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD)	Dermatology / Infection Control and Prevention	Do not come to school	A week has passed
Pertussis	Respiratory Medicine / Infection Control and Prevention	Do not come to school	5 days after treatment started, and coughing has improved. Wear a mask until full recovery.
Mycoplasma pneumoniae	Respiratory Medicine / Infection Control and Prevention	Do not come to school	Remission

If you are unsure which division to consult, contact Infection Control and Prevention (ICP) Clinic