Infection Control for Patients with Cystic Fibrosis in the Hospital

One challenge for patients with cystic fibrosis (CF) is that germs can be spread between patients. The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation has guidelines to help limit the spread of infection. For patient safety, we must follow these guidelines.

All patients with CF are treated the same whether they are in the hospital or at outpatient/clinic visits. All CF patients at all times are managed in Contact Precautions. Yet, some patients with certain bacteria, such as Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), Burkholderia species, or multi-drug resistant Pseudomonas aeruginosa, will have more rules to follow.

When you arrive at the hospital

All patients with CF will have a respiratory culture done. Until the results of the culture are known, the patient will be placed in Contact and Droplet Precautions. This is done in case the patient has new bacteria in their culture that could be spread to others. While a patient is in contact and droplet precautions, the rules listed below will be followed:

- All healthcare workers who come into the patient’s room will wear a gown, gloves, and a mask.
- Patients may leave their rooms only for medical tests (such as x-rays).
- Upon leaving the room, patients will wash their hands well. They will also need to wear a clean hospital bathrobe and a mask.

If the final culture results do not contain MRSA, multi-drug resistant Pseudomonas aeruginosa, or Burkholderia species, then the precautions with a face mask can be stopped. Gowns and gloves will still be worn by healthcare workers and visitors alike throughout the hospital stay or clinic visit.

Outside the patient room

All patients with CF need to wear masks when they are outside of their rooms for their own safety.

Classroom and child life rooms

Unrelated patients with CF should not have contact with each other in the hospital. This applies to the patient units and in common places such as the cafeteria, school, playroom and family lounge.

- Only one child with CF at a time can be in the classroom or child life room.
- School teachers and child life staff will wipe down the desk with a disinfectant after the child with CF leaves the classroom or child life room.
- School teachers and child life staff will create a fair system to allow equal sharing of the classroom and child life room for children with CF.
Hospital rooms

Unrelated patients with CF should not visit with each other in the hospital. This includes in the patient’s room and common places such as the cafeteria, playroom, and school.

Organism-specific guidelines

**MRSA, Burkholderia species, and multi-drug resistant P. aeruginosa**

- Patients may leave their rooms for medical needs which include walking with staff supervision.
- Healthcare workers will practice contact and droplet precautions when coming into the room.
- Upon leaving their room patients will wash their hands well. They will also need to wear a clean hospital bathrobe and a mask

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person’s health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 10/2015 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#6413