

# Infection Preventionist Lunch and Learn

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Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAI) Prevention Program

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WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT  
*of* HEALTH SERVICES

# Series Objectives

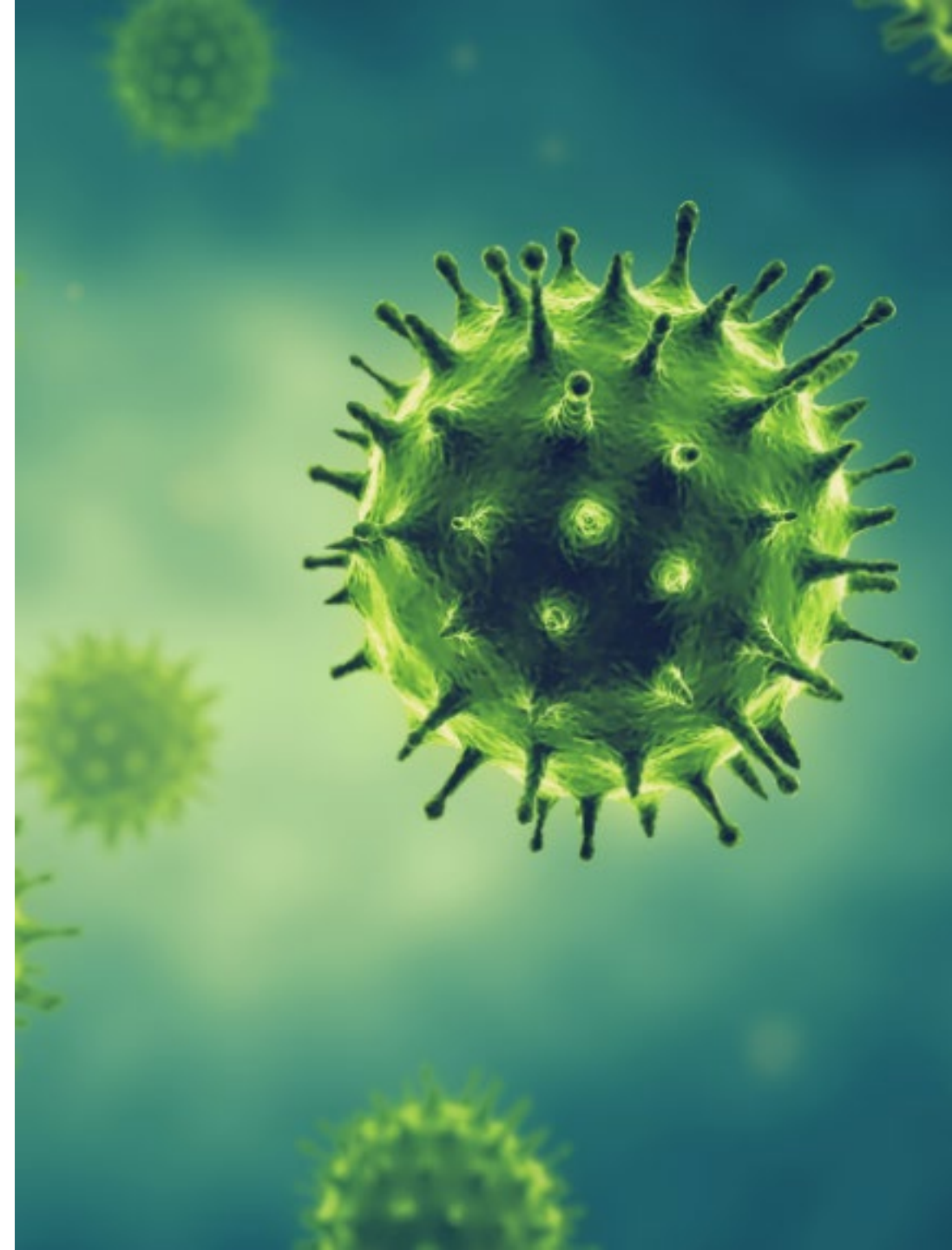
- Encourage learning, growth, and networking
- Provide non-regulatory education and information
- Discuss topics relevant to new infection preventionists (IPs)

# Respiratory Reminders



# Respiratory Viruses

- Include influenza viruses, SARS-CoV-2, respiratory syncytial virus, adenovirus, and more.
- Cause many illnesses including:
  - Common cold.
  - Influenza.
  - Other respiratory syndromes.
- Can cause illnesses of varying severity.
- Some populations are at higher risk.



# Outbreak Prevention Strategies

Air quality  
optimization

Respiratory  
hygiene  
principles

Transmission-  
based  
precautions

Employee  
health policies

Testing

Outbreak  
detection and  
reporting

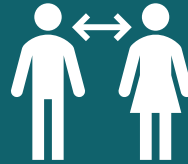
Broad use of  
source control

Preparedness

# Optimize Indoor Air Quality



Limit crowding in communal spaces.



Seat those with respiratory symptoms separately from healthy patients.

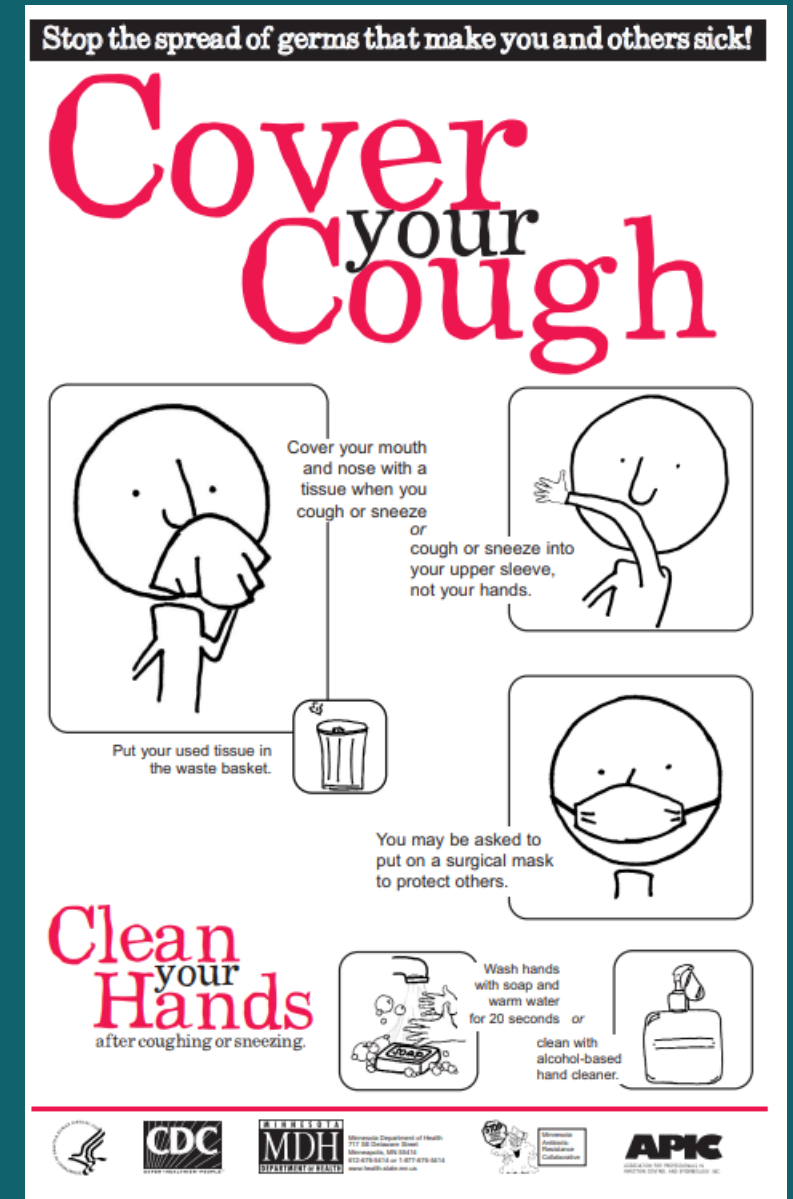


Work with maintenance or engineering department to optimize the air handling system.

# Implement Respiratory Hygiene Principles

Provide the following at entrances and common areas:

- Facemasks for those with respiratory symptoms
- Alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR)
- Tissues
- Waste receptacles
- "Cover Your Cough" signage



Cover Your Cough poster

# Utilize Transmission Based Precautions

- Contact, droplet, and/or airborne precautions may apply.
- Follow [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) guidance](#).
- Remember that CDC core practices and standard precautions **always** apply.
- Implement isolation precautions early based on symptoms.
- Create a solid process for stocking and placement of isolation carts.



# Transmission- based Precautions Reference Guide

## Transmission-Based Precautions in Health Care Settings Reference Guide

This reference guide may be used for common diseases to prevent transmission of infectious agents in health care settings. For a more complete list of infectious diseases and indicated precautions, see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) [Appendix A: Type and Duration of Recommended for Selected Infections and Conditions](#). For a general list of clinical syndromes or conditions warranting empiric transmission-based precautions, refer to CDC's [Appendix A: Table 2. Clinical Syndromes or Conditions Warranting Empiric Transmission-Based Precautions in Addition to Standard Precautions](#).

### Standard precautions

Standard precautions are a set of infection control practices used to prevent transmission of diseases that can be acquired by contact with blood, body fluids, non-intact skin (including rashes), and mucous membranes.

Standard precautions should be used when providing care to all patients and residents, whether they appear infectious, symptomatic, or not. Standard precautions apply at all times and in all locations of health care.

#### Standard precautions

- **Practice hand hygiene.** Hand hygiene refers to cleaning your hands, either by washing with soap and water or by using alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR).
- **Use personal protective equipment** whenever there is an expectation of possible exposure to infectious material.
- **Properly clean and disinfect patient care equipment** following products' manufacturer's instructions for use, including amount, dilution, and contact time.
- **Promote respiratory hygiene or cough etiquette** among staff, patients, and residents.
- **Follow safe injection practices** to prevent exposures to bloodborne pathogens.

Additional information on [standard precautions](#) is available on the CDC website.

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- **Wear a surgical or procedure mask** (a respirator is not necessary) for close contact with infectious patient or resident. The mask is generally donned upon room entry.
- **The door to the room may remain open.**
- **Limit movement of the patient or resident outside of the room** to medically necessary purposes only. Patients and residents on droplet precautions who must be transported outside of the room should wear a surgical or procedure mask if tolerated and practice respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.

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# Follow Employee Health Policies

- Provide and encourage vaccination per CDC recommendations.
- Develop policies that promote staying home while ill.
- Ensure staff return to work only when appropriate per guidance
  - [COVID-19 has specific guidance.](#)
  - Other respiratory illnesses: at least 24 hours fever free.





# Perform Respiratory Testing

- Work with lab and providers to determine appropriate testing.
- Follow specimen collection and transport requirements.
- Fee exempt testing may be available through the [Wisconsin State Lab of Hygiene \(WSLH\)](#) in outbreak situations.



A person wearing a white lab coat is sitting at a desk, writing in a notebook with a silver pen. The background is blurred, showing a warm, indoor setting.

# Recognize Outbreaks Early

- An outbreak is **three or more** respiratory cases with onset **within 72 hours** of each other.
- Suspicion for an outbreak should begin when the first case is recognized.
- Infection prevention measures should be put in place as soon as possible.

# Report Illnesses and Outbreaks

By [state statute](#), reportable diseases and outbreaks must be reported to local public health.

## Category I

Report  
immediately.  
Includes  
outbreaks.

## Category II

Report within  
72 hours.

# Consider Broad Use of Source Control

- Broader source control is recommended:
  - During outbreaks.
  - During periods of higher community transmission.
- Utilize data to inform decisions on broad source control:
  - [RESP-NET dashboards](#).
  - [National Emergency Department Visits for COVID-19, Influenza, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus](#).
  - [ILINet](#).



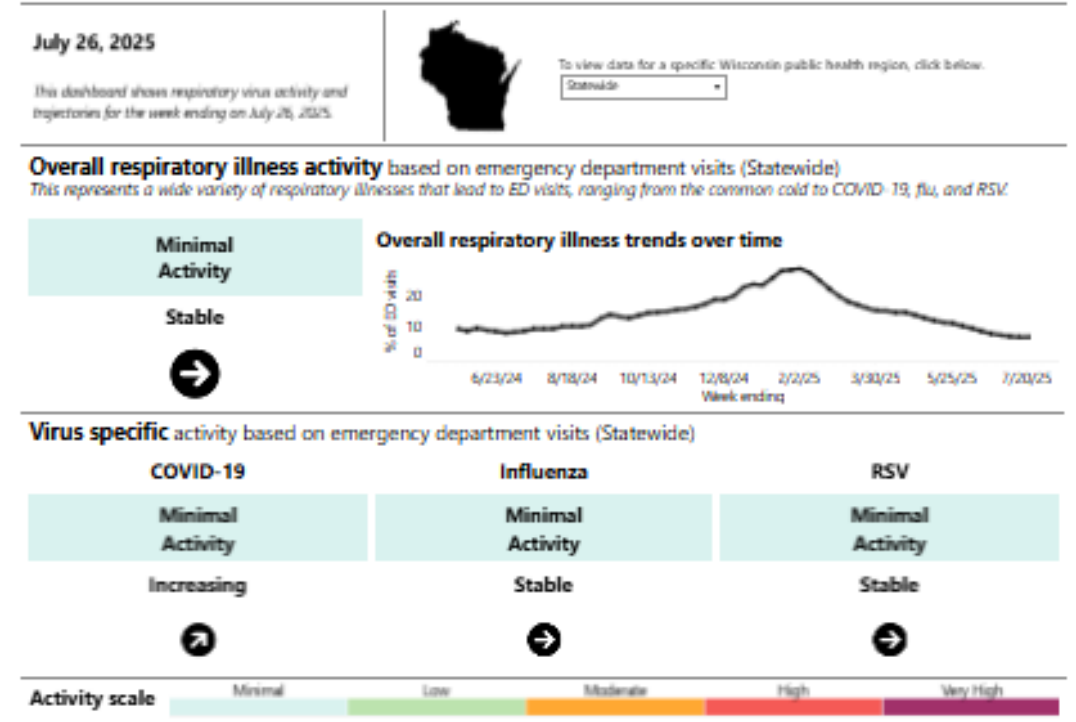
# Stay Prepared

- Pay attention to local, statewide, and national **trends** in respiratory illnesses.
- Ensure **policies are in place** and up to date.
- **Perform audits** regularly in the facility.
- **Reach out to your regional infection preventionist for support as needed!**



# Resources

- [Respiratory data dashboard](#)
- [Disease reporting webpage](#)
- [Acute gastroenteritis outbreaks guide for long-term care](#)
- [Respiratory Illness Outbreaks guide for long term care](#)





# Questions?

# IP Starter Kit

- Interactive, web-based [resource](#)
- Background information, resources, and templates
- Covers topics applicable to IPs across care settings



# Contact the HAI Prevention Program



**Email:** [dhswhaipreventionprogram@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:dhswhaipreventionprogram@dhs.wisconsin.gov)



**Phone:** 608-267-7711



**Website:** [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/hai/contacts.htm](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/hai/contacts.htm)

**Send  
Questions  
and Topic  
Suggestions**

**Email your ideas to Ashley O'Keefe**



[Ashley.OKeefe@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:Ashley.OKeefe@dhs.wisconsin.gov)

# Upcoming Lunch and Learn Session

**Date: October 14, 2025**

**Topic: OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens**