

# Infection control precautions for severe respiratory diseases

## Standard precautions

- handwashing and antiseptics (hand hygiene);
- use of personal protective equipment (PPE) when handling blood, body substances, excretions and secretions;
- appropriate handling of patient care equipment and soiled linen;
- prevention of needlestick/ sharp injuries;
- environmental cleaning and spills-management; and
- appropriate handling of waste.

## Additional (transmission-based) precautions

These are taken while still ensuring standard precautions are maintained:

- droplet precautions;
- contact precautions; and
- airborne precautions (including the use of P2 respirators and negative pressure rooms if available).

## Personal protective equipment (PPE)

PPE includes:

- P2 respirator;
- disposable gloves;
- protective eyewear (ie. goggles/visor/shield);
- long-sleeved cuffed gown;
- cap (in high-risk situations where there may be increased aerosols); and
- plastic apron (if splashing of blood, body fluids, excretions or secretions is anticipated).

PPE should be worn by:

- all people who provide direct patient care (eg doctors, nurses, radiographers, physiotherapists, border workers and airline staff);
- all supporting staff, including medical aides and cleaning staff;
- all laboratory workers handling specimens from a patient being investigated for pandemic or avian influenza;
- all sterilizing services workers handling equipment that requires decontamination and has come from a patient with pandemic or avian influenza; and
- family members or visitors.

## Respirators and masks

P2 respirators are expected to minimise air-borne and droplet transmission of respiratory secretions from an infectious case to the attending person. If used, they should be fit tested at least once a year, and fit checked each time one is put on.

Surgical masks are expected to minimise droplet transmission of respiratory secretions from an infectious case to other close contacts. Unless it needs to be removed for examination purposes, the infectious case should wear a surgical mask to minimise exhalation of respiratory secretions when other people are in the same room.

