

Everyone has germs, and most of them are harmless. A few germs, however, can make you sick. At St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital, our goal is to protect our patients, their families, and visitors from germs that might make them sick.

In the hospital, precautions are used as a way of stopping the spread of germs from one person to another.

Using precautions and signs provides information to staff, patients, families, and visitors what actions may be necessary to prevent the spread of infection.

What are "Contact Precautions"?

You have been placed on "**CONTACT PRECAUTIONS**" because you have (or may have) germs in or on your body that can be harmful to other people. These germs are spread when people touch you or your environment, or when you touch others. Placing you on **CONTACT PRECAUTIONS** informs staff, so they can prevent the spread of these germs to other patients.

What will the hospital staff do if you are on CONTACT PRECAUTIONS?

- Wash their hands before and after **EVERY** encounter with you
- Place a green **Contact Precautions** sign on your door to let other staff and visitors entering your room know what to do
- Wear gloves when entering your room and gowns when they may have contact with you or your environment

*It's OK to remind our staff to clean their hands and to wear gloves and gowns while providing care to you.

What can you do to help?

- Wash your hands often, especially upon entering or exiting your room
- Limit visitors
- Be sure visitors entering your room have read the sign on your door and wash their hands
- Visitors should report to the Nurses Station should they have any questions before entering your room

What is the best way to clean your hands?

- **Use soap and water (especially if you have a diarrheal disease)**
 - Wet hands with warm water
 - Dispense a palmful of soap
 - Work up lather by rubbing hands together for 20 seconds, covering all surfaces of your hands and fingers
 - Rinse hands thoroughly
 - Dry hands with paper towels
 - Discard towel in the trash container
- **Use alcohol gel (dispensers located at entrance to patient rooms) for all other encounters:**
 - Dispense two measures of gel into the palm of one hand
 - Rub hands together covering all surfaces of hand and fingers until dry