



**Provider Health & Safety Alert**  
**Re-Emphasizing Respiratory Precautions for Pre-hospital Providers**  
**January 21, 2020**

As the system continues to deal with an unusually aggressive respiratory season of not only seasonal influenza but several other respiratory syndromes and diseases, there is renewed concerns regarding an emerging new variate of the coronavirus that was responsible for the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003 as well.

Given that many of these illnesses can create concern for providers and present with the same signs and symptoms, it is important to continue **to follow our respiratory infectious disease precautions even when the underlying disease organism is unknown**. Should there be an occasion for changes in the precautions; prompt notification will be distributed to system providers.

Providers should undertake the following steps on all respiratory patient interactions:

- Maintain a heightened awareness to the potential for interface with patients with any of the circulating organisms of concern.
- Obtain a thorough travel history that covers the past month.
- Place a **surgical mask** on the patient
- Providers should utilize A **Fitted N95 Respirator** if within 6 feet of a suspect patient or undertaking aerosol-generating procedures or providing airway management such as suctioning, lgel or endotracheal intubation.
- Ensure the patient is "wrapped" prior to being moved to minimize environmental contamination.
- Confirm the hospital or other receiving facilities have been notified of the possibility of an infectious disease.
- Perform thorough cleaning of all equipment that had contact with the patient or the environmental surfaces of the patient's room.
- Understand the need for diligence in hand hygiene.

It is vital that any control measures are implemented quickly and sustained in order to prevent additional transmission. For additional guidance on implementing control measures and to report unusual incidents occurring during any of your agency's responses, contact the System Infection Preventionist.

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