

PRESENTER'S SCRIPT

Module 4 Respiratory Hygiene/ Cough Etiquette

SLIDE 1

This slide series was created to complement the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) publication titled, *Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care*. This publication was developed to help increase adherence with established infection prevention practices.

This slide series provides an overview of the basic principles of infection prevention and control that form the basis for CDC recommendations for dental health care settings. It can be used to educate and train infection prevention coordinators, educators, consultants, and other dental health care personnel (DHCP).

The *Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care* can be found at www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/pdf/safe-care2.pdf.

SLIDE 2

This slide series is divided into 10 modules. The first module provides an introduction to infection prevention for dental settings. It is followed by 9 additional slide modules—one for each element of standard precautions, as well as for dental unit water quality and program evaluation. Module 4 provides information on respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette.

SLIDE 3

Infection control problems that are identified in the course of outbreak investigations often indicate the need for new recommendations or reinforcement of existing infection control recommendations to protect patients. In 2007, CDC published updated guidelines for preventing the transmission of infectious agents in health care settings. As a result, two areas of practice relevant to dentistry were added to the set of standard precautions: respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette and safe injection practices. Safe injection practices will be discussed in Module 6.

SLIDE 4

Recommendations for respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette are based on observations made during severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreaks, where failures to implement simple source control measures with patients, visitors, and health-care personnel with respiratory symptoms may have contributed to SARS-coronavirus transmission. For more information, see the *2007 Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings*.

SLIDE 5

Respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette is a combination of infection prevention measures designed to limit the transmission of respiratory pathogens spread by droplet or airborne routes. Strategies target primarily patients and individuals accompanying patients, such as family and friends, to the dental setting who might have undiagnosed transmissible respiratory infections.

They also apply to anyone, including DHCP, with signs of illness, including cough, congestion, runny nose, or increased production of respiratory secretions. These infection prevention measures should begin at the point of the initial encounter with a health care setting, such as reception or front desk of an ambulatory clinic or dental office, and continue throughout the visit.

SLIDE 6

The following measures to contain respiratory secretions are recommended for all individuals with signs and symptoms of a respiratory infection: cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, use the nearest waste receptacle to dispose of the tissue after use, and perform hand hygiene after having contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects or materials. Dental office staff can also offer masks to coughing patients and other symptomatic people when they enter the dental setting and encourage people with symptoms to sit as far away from others as possible.

SLIDE 7

Post visual alerts (in the appropriate language) at the entrance of the dental setting instructing patients and visitors to inform DHCP immediately of symptoms of a respiratory infection and to practice respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette measures. Visual alerts can be downloaded from the CDC and certain state health department websites.

SLIDE 8

The following supplies should be provided: tissues and no-touch waste receptacles for disposing of used tissues and dispensers of alcohol-based hand rub and hand washing materials (when a sink is available). Masks may be used to contain respiratory secretions for coughing patients.

SLIDE 9

DHCP should be educated on the importance of infection prevention measures to contain respiratory secretions to prevent the spread of respiratory pathogens when examining and caring for patients with signs and symptoms of a respiratory infection. DHCP should ensure they are up-to-date with all recommended vaccinations, including the annual influenza vaccine.

SLIDE 10

For more information on respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, see:

- CDC. *2007 Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings* at www.cdc.gov/hicpac/pdf/isolation/Isolation2007.pdf.
- CDC's Influenza (Flu) website, which also includes educational and promotional information at www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm, www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/resphgiene.htm, www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm.
- CDC. *Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care* at www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/pdf/safe-care2.pdf.