



Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING
POST-ANESTHESIA RECOVERY ROOM (PACU)
POLICY AND PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: INFECTION CONTROL IN THE PACU

Policy No.: PACU07

Revision Date: 08/2017

Effective Date: 06/1999

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Purpose of Procedure: To establish guidelines to prevent contamination and spread of infection within the PACU.

Physician's Order Required: No

Performed By: All nursing staff, MDs, ancillary personnel

Policy Statements:

1. Personnel
 - a. All personnel will comply with pre-employment and annual physical examination requirements.
 - b. Employees with eye, skin, respiratory, gastrointestinal or other infections will not work in the PACU.
 - c. Dress code for restricted areas will be followed.
 - d. Handwashing standards will be followed.
 - e. Universal precautions will be followed for all patient contacts.
 - f. Strict aseptic technique will be observed when handling dressings, IV lines, indwelling catheters, and other invasive devices.
 - g. All personnel splashed with blood or other body fluids will change scrub attire immediately.
 - h. Persons not directly involved in PACU patient care will not enter the area.

 2. Materials/Equipment

KEY POINT: Cleaning with hospital approved disinfectant can prevent contamination between patients.

 - a. Clean linen will be maintained on a covered cart.
 - b. Gurneys and airpals will be cleaned with hospital approved disinfectant between patients.
 - c. Humidifiers and tubing are single patient use.
 - d. Disposable suction catheters will be discarded after use.
 - e. All equipment will be discarded, if disposable, or appropriately disinfected/sterilized, if not disposable.
 - f. Oxygen masks and cannulas are single patient use.
 - g. Intravenous lines will be inserted aseptically and dated.
 - h. Unused portions of IV fluids will be discarded immediately.
 - i. Gurneys will be stored three (3) feet apart.
 - j. Sterile supplies and medications expiration dates will be monitored monthly.

 3. Physical Plant (Maintained by Facilities Management)
 - a. The thermostat and humidity system will be properly maintained and maintenance documentation completed.
 - b. Facilities Management will verify that air conditioning filters are not changed when PACU is occupied. Filters will meet standards and be serviced according to manufacturer's guidelines.

 4. Isolation Patients
 - a. The operating surgeon or circulating nurse will advise PACU personnel of known or suspected infections prior to patient transfer to PACU.
 - b. Category 4 isolation patients will be recovered in the private room. Appropriate category card will be placed on the door.
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APPROVED BY: Practice Council

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES • DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

Signature(s) on File.

- 1) Equipment/supplies needed in isolation room:
 - Thermometer
 - Suction
 - IV pump
 - Trash can lined with red plastic bag
- 2) Equipment/supplies needed outside isolation room:
Isolation cart with:
 - Goggles
 - Gloves
 - Isolation gowns
 - Masks

KEY POINT: High filtration masks are required with category 4 isolation.

- c. Follow nursing procedures for isolation outlined in the Infection Control Manual.
 - d. The nurse is responsible for all care needs and remains with patient until transferred to assigned unit.
KEY POINT: All efforts will be made to assign one nurse only.
 - e. After patient is transferred, the PACU nurse and/or nursing attendant will dismantle and dispose of all disposable equipment according to Infection Control procedures. All equipment and non-disposable supplies will be disinfected according to Infection Control procedures.
 - f. The OR custodian will clean the room according to Infection Control procedures.
5. Environmental Maintenance
- a. PACU traffic flow will be strictly controlled.
 - b. Spilled organic matter on the floor or walls will be cleaned immediately with hospital approved disinfectant. The cloth will be disposed of in the proper receptacle.
 - c. Gurneys will be cleaned with hospital approved disinfectant between patient use.
 - d. OR custodian will wet mop floors daily.
 - e. All horizontal surfaces, e.g., sinks, faucets, and hopper, and grossly soiled walls will be cleaned with a hospital approved disinfectant.
KEY POINT: Mopping and cleaning will be done routinely when PACU is unoccupied, preferably at the end of the day.
KEY POINT: All cleaning equipment will be for OR/PACU use only.
 - f. Trash and linen will be placed in covered hampers and emptied when full.
 - g. Strict pest control will be employed.

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References:

Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center (2014), Infection Control Manual
Joint Commission 2009 IC.01.01.01

Goodman, T., & Spry, C. (2014). Essentials of Perioperative Nursing (5th Ed),

06/99 – Revised (formerly PACU 12)
12/03 – Reviewed
05/06 – Reviewed

09/09 – Reviewed
08/17 – Revised