

Guidelines for health care providers

Health care workers if handle the patients without observing recommended universal precautions are at high risk of acquiring the infection. Therefore health workers while taking care of these patients should observe the following:

In addition to standard universal precautions, health workers should strictly apply recommended infection control measures to avoid exposure to infected blood, fluids, or contaminated environments or objects – such as a patient’s soiled linen or used needles.

- They should use personal protection equipment such as individual gowns (impermeable), gloves, masks and goggles or face shields and shoe cover..
- They should not reuse protective equipment or clothing unless they have been properly disinfected with 1% bleach or phenolic products.
- They should change gloves between caring for each patient suspected of having Ebola and strictly follow hospital waste management guidelines.
- Invasive procedures that can expose medical doctors, nurses and others to infection should be carried out under strict, safe conditions. For aerosol generating procedures PPE should include respiratory protection N95 masks or higher and the procedure should be performed in airborne isolation room.
- Infected patients should be kept separate from other patients and healthy people, as much as possible.
- Dedicated medical equipment should be used (preferably disposable whenever possible)
- All non-dedicated, non-disposable medical equipment used for patient care should be cleaned and disinfected as per manufacturer’s instructions and hospital policies
- Use of injections and sharps should be limited.
- If the use of sharp objects cannot be avoided, ensure that the following precautions are observed:
 - Never replace the cap on a used needle.
 - Never direct the point of a used needle towards any part of the body.
 - Do not remove used needles from disposable syringes by hand, and do not bend, break or otherwise manipulate used needles by hand.
 - Never re-use syringes or needles.
 - Dispose of syringes, needles, scalpel blades and other sharp objects in appropriate, puncture-resistant containers.
 - Ensure that containers for sharps objects are placed as close as possible to the immediate area where the objects are being used (‘point of use’) to limit the distance between use and disposal, and ensure the containers remain upright at all times.
 - Ensure that the containers are securely sealed with a lid and replaced when $\frac{3}{4}$ full.

- Ensure the containers are placed in an area that is not easily accessible by visitors, particularly children (e.g. containers should not be placed on floors, or on the lower shelves of trolleys in areas where children might gain access).
- Closed, resistant shoes (e.g. boots) should be used by all individuals in the patient care area to avoid accidents with misplaced, contaminated sharp objects.