

This policy has been adopted by UNC Hospitals for its use in infection control. It is provided to you as information only.

**Attachment 4: Procedure for Instituting Airborne Precautions
When the Patient is Housed in a Shared Suite**

At times, the decision to exclude tuberculosis (TB) will be made for a patient housed in a shared suite room. In this situation, it is important that the nursing staff take measures to protect the roommate, the visitors, and the UNC Medical Center staff from further exposure until the suspect TB patient can be moved to an appropriate Airborne Isolation room. It is also important to protect the privacy of the suspect TB patient while communicating with the roommate regarding the institution of Airborne Precautions and the follow-up that will occur should their exposure to a communicable disease be confirmed.

When the physician orders Airborne Precautions to rule out tuberculosis in a patient housed with a roommate in a shared suite:

1. Place a surgical mask on the suspect TB patient.
2. If the patient cannot tolerate wearing a mask, instruct the patient to cover all coughs and sneezes with a tissue. If the patient breathes through a tracheostomy, loosely tie a surgical mask over it.
3. Close the curtain between the patients.
4. Keep the door to the room closed.
5. Inform the Patient Logistic Center, (PLC) that the patient must be moved to an approved Airborne Precautions room as soon as possible.
6. If there will be a delay of more than 2 hours in moving the suspected TB patient, move either the suspected TB patient to a private room on the unit or move the roommate to another private or shared suite on the unit, if possible.
7. Obtain a HEPA unit from Patient Equipment and place it in the room near the source patient.
8. Place the Airborne Precautions sign outside the room, along with N95 respirators. Surgical masks should be available outside the room for visitors.
9. Visitors should be excluded until 30 minutes after the source patient has been transferred out of the room. The Airborne Precautions sign states, "Visitors must report to the nursing station before entering."
10. The source patient's roommate should be informed as follows: "Your roommate's physician is ruling out a communicable disease. In the unlikely event, the patient actually has a communicable disease; your physician will be contacted by our Infection Prevention Department. Your doctor will provide advice regarding any follow-up that may be needed." The physician of the source patient's roommate should also be notified.