

Transmission of Respiratory Diseases

Contact (direct and indirect)

- Respiratory secretions may be passed directly from person to person by hand-to-hand, or hand-to-eye, hand-to-nose or hand-to-mouth contact.
- Respiratory secretions may be passed indirectly from person to person when they contaminate surfaces, such as household or office items, toys, door handles, or light switches which are then handled or contact the mouth, nose or eyes.

Droplet

- Respiratory droplets are expelled from the nose and mouth by talking, coughing and sneezing. The droplets are heavy and can travel around one metre before landing on surfaces.

Airborne

- Respiratory droplets that are very small may remain suspended in the air for some time and be carried by dust or smoke particles for well over two metres. Transmission through this route is more common in crowded, enclosed spaces.

Ways to manage the risk

- Clean surfaces with water and mild detergent, handle and dispose of waste carefully.
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth and eyes.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Encourage cough etiquette and respiratory hygiene in those around you.
- Keep your distance from people who are coughing or sneezing; stand above them or to the side.
- Use personal protective equipment.

