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Guidance

## **8. COVID-19 infection prevention and control guidance: transmission based precautions (TBPs)**

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This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control/covid-19-infection-prevention-and-control-guidance-transmission-based-precautions-tbps>

Transmission based precautions (TBPs) are additional measures (to standard infection control precautions (SICPs)) required when caring for patients/ individuals with a known or suspected infection such as COVID-19.

TBPs are based upon the route of transmission and include:

a) Contact precautions

Used to prevent and control infections that spread via direct contact with the patient or indirectly from the patient's immediate care environment (including care equipment). This is the most common route of cross-infection transmission. **COVID-19 can be spread via this route.**

b) Droplet precautions

Used to prevent and control infections spread over short distances (at least 3 feet/1metre) via droplets (>5µm) from the respiratory tract of individuals directly onto a mucosal surfaces or conjunctivae of another individual. Droplets penetrate the respiratory system to above the alveolar level. **COVID-19 is predominantly spread via this route and the precautionary distance has been increased to 2 metres in care settings.**

c) Airborne precautions

Used to prevent and control infection spread without necessarily having close patient contact via aerosols (=5µm) from the respiratory tract of one individual directly onto a mucosal surface or conjunctivae of another individual. Aerosols penetrate the respiratory system to the alveolar level. **COVID-19 can spread via this route when aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) are undertaken.**

## Transmission characteristics

Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 implications for infection prevention precautions is contained within the WHO scientific briefing paper (<https://www.who.int/news-room/commentaries/detail/transmission-of-sars-cov-2-implications-for-infection-prevention-precautions>) and CDC's scientific brief (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-sars-cov-2.html>) (5 October 2020)

Literature reviews to support evidence for transmission characteristics

([https://hpspubsrepo.blob.core.windows.net/hps-website/nss/2985/documents/1\\_covid-19-rapid-review-ipc-for-covid-19.pdf](https://hpspubsrepo.blob.core.windows.net/hps-website/nss/2985/documents/1_covid-19-rapid-review-ipc-for-covid-19.pdf)) and TBPs (<http://www.nipcm.hps.scot.nhs.uk/resources/literature-reviews/>) are available.

New SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern have been identified in the UK. For further information on the variants refer to the following documents:

- PHE Technical briefing: Investigation of novel SARS-CoV-2 variant: Variant of concern 202012/01 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/investigation-of-novel-sars-cov-2-variant-variant-of-concern-20201201>)
- ECDC. Rapid Risk Assessment. Risk related to spread of new SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern in the EU/EEA (<https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/COVID-19-risk-related-to-spread-of-new-SARS-CoV-2-variants-EU-EEA.pdf>)

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