CDC issues updated TB guidelines

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has updated guidelines for preventing transmission of tuberculosis in health care.

Since the previous 1994 guidelines were issued, reports of TB outbreaks and transmissions in health care have declined. The new guidelines apply to all health care settings, not only to hospitals.

Highlighted for surgical suites

Recommendations for ORs are similar to 1994. Highlights include:

• When possible, postpone nonurgent surgery on patients with suspected or known TB until the patient is determined to be noninfectious or not to have TB.
• When surgery cannot be postponed, perform procedures in a surgical suite with recommended ventilation controls.
• Surgery on patients with suspected or confirmed TB should be scheduled when a minimum number of health care workers are present. Such procedures should be performed at the end of the day to maximize time for removal of airborne contamination.
• In the usual design in which the OR does not have an anteroom, keep the OR doors closed and minimize traffic in and out of the room.
• If an OR has an anteroom, the anteroom should either be 1) positive pressure compared with both the corridor and the OR (with filtered supply air) or 2) negative pressure compared with both the corridor and the OR.
• When surgical procedures are performed on patients with suspected or confirmed TB, health care workers should wear respiratory protection both to protect the sterile field and to protect the workers. A respirator with a valveless filtering face piece (eg, a N95 disposable respirator) should be used.

Reference