

Infection Control Guidelines for Cleaning and Maintaining Patient Care Equipment/Devices/Environment

- Sterile supplies and equipment are preferably stored in closed cabinets or shelves that are elevated at least 8-10 inches off the floor and 18-20 inches from the ceiling. Sterile or clean supplies must never be stored on the floor. Follow CPD storage requirements.
- All sterile packages must be rotated in a first in, first out basis. All packages must be inspected by the user before the package is opened. If the package is damaged, the item is not sterile and cannot be used. If in doubt as to the sterility of the item, consider the item unsterile and discard appropriately.
- All patient gear that requires sterilization will be sent to CPD for sterilization.
- Disposable items are to be utilized as much as possible. They are to be marked with the patients name and discarded upon their discharge. Disposables should not be reused.
- All sterile supplies are to be maintained in accordance with CPD policy.
- Clean and dirty supply rooms MUST be separate.
- ***Critical items*** are instruments or objects that are introduced directly into the blood stream or into normally sterile areas of the body (vascular catheters, surgical instruments, cardiac and urinary catheters, implants, ultrasound probes used in sterile body cavities). These items must be sterilized.
- ***Semi-critical items*** are items that come in contact with intact mucous membranes, but do not ordinarily penetrate body surfaces (respiratory therapy equipment, anesthesia equipment, laryngoscope blades, esophageal manometry probes, cystoscopes, anorectal manometry catheters, rectal and vaginal probes). These items, even though some are covered with a sheath or outer covering during use, must be subjected to a high-level disinfection procedure after each use. This can be accomplished by thorough and meticulous cleaning of the item and then soaking the item in an appropriate high-level disinfectant, such as Cidex OPA®, for a minimum time of 20 minutes. After soaking, the instrument must be rinsed with sterile water three (3) separate times. Items are then dried using 70% isopropyl alcohol, covered with a clean cloth or wrap, and stored in a clean place for use.
- ***Non-critical items*** are items that do not touch the patient or only come in contact with intact skin. There is virtually no documented risk of transmitting infectious agents to patients via these items. Routine washing of these items with a hospital grade detergent/disinfectant is generally sufficient. Large equipment items such as gurneys, mobile vital sign machines, wheel chairs are cleaned on a weekly basis and when soiled. Other items such as mobile IV poles, bassinets, cribs, electronic IV infusion pumps, walkers, bedside commodes, and crutches should be cleaned using the hospital approved disinfectant wipes (SaniCloths® or CaviWipes®/Cavicide® spray) after each patient use. Before cleaning, these items must be stored in the Soiled Utility room or any area designated for “dirty equipment”. After cleaning, these items will be designated as clean using a green label that reads “CLEANED”, the date it was cleaned, and the initials of the person performing the cleaning. The cleaned equipment should be maintained in a designated clean, dust-free space or store room. When clean equipment is put back into use, remove and dispose of the green CLEANED label.

Small equipment items, such as BP cuffs and stethoscopes, are rarely associated with the risk of infection. However, individual stethoscopes have been linked to carriage of pathogenic microorganisms resulting in healthcare-associated infections. Using an alcohol prep pad or a disinfectant wipe to decontaminate the device after each patient use will suffice in keeping the item clean for each patient. Small equipment items need to be cleaned periodically and if contaminated or visibly soiled. Keeping in mind that areas have certain equipment that cannot be cleaned/decontaminated using the approved wipes, it will be left to the discretion of the individual department to choose the correct cleaner/disinfectant for their equipment as recommended by the equipment manufacturer with the caveat that it be approved by Infection Control.

In the clinical setting, it is important that staff use disinfectant cloths (SaniCloths® or CaviWipes®) to wipe down doorknobs, chair handles, exam tables, and other surfaces in exam rooms. This should be done daily at the end of the day. Regarding the expiration of the approved cleaner/disinfectant SaniCloth®, if the container has a manufacturer's date on it, it is good for 2 years from that date. The newer containers (2010 and up) contain an actual expiration date as do the containers of Cavicide.

This policy applies to all NMCP command patient care areas including Branch Medical Clinics.

A sample of the standardized label appears below. The label packs contain 200 GREEN labels. The item number is AVE05494 and can be ordered in EMALL.

The cost is approximately \$3-4/pack. No other type of label will be used for designating CLEANED patient care equipment or devices.

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Print or Write Color Coding Labels

Green Glow • Removable



1" x 3"
(actual size not shown)

200
Labels



Package made from 100% post-consumer recycled material

05494™
1648GG

5
Labels
per sheet

Avery™
TEMPLATES

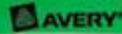
Hot Glue & Glue™
Use templates for 1/2"™
fold of convenience

Not recommended for
other uses please



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