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Procedure: Environmental Cleaning

Date:

Revised Date:

Purpose: Maintaining a clean and safe health care environment is an essential component of Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) and is integral to the safety of patients and staff. Environmental cleaning and disinfection should be performed on a routine and consistent basis to provide for a safe and sanitary environment. Responsibility for cleaning needs to be clearly defined and understood.

General:

Cleaning is the removal of foreign material (e.g., dust, soil, organic material such as blood, secretions, excretions and microorganisms) from a surface or object. Cleaning physically removes rather than kills microorganisms, reducing the organism load on a surface using water, detergents and mechanical action. Thorough cleaning is required for any equipment/device to be disinfected, as organic material may inactivate a disinfectant.

Disinfection is a process used on inanimate objects and surfaces to kill microorganisms. Disinfection will kill most disease-causing microorganisms but may not kill all bacterial spores.

Surfaces in Health Care Settings When selecting surfaces for use in clinical areas within health care settings, surfaces with the following characteristics are recommended, as these characteristics minimize the risk of microbial contamination: cleanable, easy to maintain and repair, resistant to microbial growth, nonporous (smooth), and seamless. Cloth furnishings harbour higher concentrations of fungi than nonporous furnishings. Upholstered furniture and furnishings and other cloth items that cannot be cleaned shall not be used in care areas.

1. Responsibility:

Clinic staff is responsible for cleaning examination/procedure rooms between patients.

_____ (Name of in-house or contracted environmental cleaning service provider) is responsible for scheduled (e.g. end of day) environmental cleaning.

2. Disinfectant product: (Applications of cleaning chemicals by aerosol or trigger sprays may cause eye injuries or induce or compound respiratory problems or illness and must not be used.)

Equipment and surfaces in the clinical office setting must be cleaned with _____ (name of disinfectant).

a) If disinfectant product is a concentrate:

- Check expiration date prior to use.
- Wear gloves when preparing and using disinfectant.
- Prepare _____ (name of disinfectant solution) by adding _____ ml of concentrate to _____ ml water. (according to manufacturer's instructions)

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- Dispense mixed disinfectants into clean, dry, appropriately-sized containers that are clearly labeled and dated. Aerosol or trigger sprays for cleaning chemicals must not be used. Discard after the expiry date.
 - If containers are reusable, empty, wash, and dry prior to refilling.
 - Never top-up existing disinfectant in container with fresh disinfectant.
- b) If disinfectant product is ready-to-use:
- _____ (name of ready-to-use disinfectant product) is used for environmental cleaning and disinfection in the clinic.
 - Check expiration date prior to use.
 - Wear gloves when using disinfectant if required by manufacturer.
 - Never top-up existing disinfectant in container with fresh disinfectant.
 - Discard single-use disinfectant containers when empty.
- c) If using disinfectant wipes, ensure container is securely closed between uses.

3. Frequency of cleaning items in the clinical practice setting

| Clean between patients | Clean at end of the day and when visibly soiled | Clean according to a fixed schedule and when visibly soiled |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Armrests on chairs ■ Beds (e.g., examination table) ■ Blood pressure cuff ■ Electronic monitoring devices, if shared (e.g., glucometer) ■ Imaging equipment (e.g., ultrasound transducers, mammography paddles, film cassettes) ■ Ophthalmoscope ■ Orthopaedic equipment (e.g., crutches) ■ Otoscope ■ Reflex hammer ■ Scales (infant) ■ Stethoscope ■ Toys ■ Transport equipment (e.g., wheelchairs) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bathrooms ■ Carpets (vacuumed) ■ Chairs, couches ■ Doorknobs ■ Floors ■ Light switches ■ Mirrors ■ Overbed lamps and lights ■ Scales (standing) ■ Tables ■ Telephones ■ Wall-mounted items (e.g., soap and ABHR dispensers, paper towel holders, glove box holders) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Appliances (refrigerators, microwaves, coffee makers) ■ Baseboards ■ Carpets (steam cleaning) ■ Ceilings and air vents ■ Exterior surfaces of machines and equipment ■ Furnishings in office spaces (e.g., desks, cabinets, bookcases) ■ Ice Machines ■ I.V. poles ■ Lockers ■ Privacy curtains ■ Radiator ■ Sterilizers ■ Televisions ■ Toy boxes and cupboards ■ Walls ■ Window air conditioners ■ Windows, window sills, window coverings |

4. Cleaning methods:

- a) Between-patient cleaning of clinical areas:
- Perform hand hygiene and put on gloves before commencing cleaning if recommended.
 - Remove items from surfaces to be cleaned. (e.g. procedure trays, bed coverings, etc.).
 - If surfaces are visibly soiled, a two-step process is followed. First clean surfaces to remove soil and then use a clean cloth soaked with disinfectant to disinfect the area. If surfaces are not visibly soiled, a one-step process using a cleaner-disinfectant is acceptable.

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- Use _____ (*single-use cleaner-disinfectant wipe OR single-use cloth soaked with cleaner-disinfectant product*).
 - Proceed from:
 - clean to dirty areas (e.g. counter top before bed or chair);
 - high surfaces to low surfaces (e.g. clean top of IV pole before cleaning wheels); and
 - low frequency touch items/surfaces (e.g. walls) to high frequency touch items/surfaces (e.g. reflex hammer, B.P. cuff).
 - Allow disinfectant product to air-dry and ensure wet contact time of _____ minutes is achieved (*consult label instructions for contact time*).
 - Remove gloves (if used) and perform hand hygiene after completing environmental cleaning.
- b) Scheduled cleaning _____ (daily, weekly, quarterly, annually):
- Perform hand hygiene and put on gloves before commencing cleaning if recommended by manufacturer.
 - Remove items from surfaces to be cleaned. (e.g. magazines, packages, etc.)
 - If a surface is visibly soiled, a two-step process is followed. First clean surfaces to remove soil and then use a clean cloth or mop to disinfect the area.
 - Dip cloth into cleaning solution only once. Do not “double-dip” into cleaning solution.
 - Proceed from:
 - clean to dirty areas (e.g. furniture, sinks before toilet);
 - high surfaces to low surfaces (e.g. clean top of IV pole before cleaning wheels); and
 - low frequency touch surfaces (e.g. walls) to high frequency touch surfaces (e.g. door knob, light switch).
 - Allow disinfectant to air-dry and ensure wet contact time of _____ minutes is achieved (*consult label instructions for contact time*).
 - Remove gloves (if used) and perform hand hygiene after completing environmental cleaning.
 - Document the date, time, and name of person responsible for cleaning in a log when scheduled (e.g. daily, weekly, annual) cleaning is done.

5. **Cleaning-up a body fluid spill**

- Restrict the activity around the spill until the area has been cleaned and disinfected and is completely dry.
- Perform hand hygiene. Put on gloves; if there is a possibility of splashing, wear a gown and facial protection (mask and eye protection or face shield).
- Confine and contain the spill; wipe up any blood or body fluid spills immediately using either disposable towels or a product designed for this purpose. Dispose of materials by placing them into regular waste receptacle, unless the soiled materials are so wet that blood can be squeezed out of them, in which case they shall be segregated into the biomedical waste container (i.e., yellow bag).
- Disinfect the entire spill area with _____ (*a hospital-grade disinfectant*) and allow it to stand for _____ (*the amount of time recommended by the manufacturer*).
- Wipe up the area again using disposable towels and discard into regular waste.
- Care should be taken to avoid splashing or generating aerosols during the cleanup.
- Remove gloves and perform hand hygiene.

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References:

1. Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario), Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee. Infection Prevention and Control for Clinical Office Practice. 1st Revision. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; April 2015.
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2. Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario), Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee. Best practices for environmental cleaning for prevention and control of infections in all health care settings. 3rd ed. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2018.
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