

Glove Use in Environmental Cleaning/Disinfection

What gloves are used in cleaning/disinfection?

Gloves used in environmental cleaning are single use, disposable gloves. They are used during cleaning/disinfection processes, handling of chemicals and waste management. These include:

- Examination/medical gloves (non-sterile, non-powdered):
 - Nitrile – safest practice.
 - Latex - Under WH&S (2011) regulations should only be used when no safer alternative exists. Allergy risks must be identified, assessed and controlled
 - Vinyl - less fit, can cause hands to sweat resulting in discomfort and skin conditions.

Note:

Reusable utility gloves should only be used for maintenance environmental cleaning and chemical use (decontaminated between uses, follow manufacturer's instructions for discard).

Why wear gloves?

Gloves are used to:

- Protect health care workers (HCWs) from exposure to blood, body substances, mucous membranes, and non-intact skin.
- Reduce the risk of spreading infectious organisms between individuals and the environment.
- Reduce the risk of HCW exposure to hazardous substances and chemicals

Facts about gloves and protection

- Gloves can carry and spread infectious organisms.
- Gloves must NOT be cleaned with alcohol-based hand rub – they are single use
- Gloves do not guarantee full protection due to potential microscopic defects or contamination during removal.
- Gloves are not a substitute for hand hygiene, in some situations hand hygiene is a better option.
- Hand hygiene must always be performed before putting on gloves and after taking them off.
- Gloves must be removed after each task or food type handling.
- Cuts or breaks on hands should be covered with an occlusive dressing before gloving.

When gloves are used in Cleaning/Disinfection

Gloves ARE indicated when performing the following tasks

Exposure type	Example
	Choice: Nitrile, Latex, Vinyl:

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	Note: those with latex allergies must wear vinyl or nitrile gloves ➤ Where the HCW skin is not intact (e.g. through eczema, or cracked or dry skin) ➤ During all activities that may involve exposure to blood and/or body substances i.e. cleaning bathrooms, sluice areas, managing used infectious cleaning equipment ➤ When attending all spill cleaning ➤ When attending to waste ➤ When cleaning/disinfecting bathrooms or where chemicals may be required ➤ When managing chemicals ➤ Handling used cleaning equipment i.e. cloths, mops, damp dusters ➤ When cleaning the cleaner's trolley Choice: Nitrile gloves: ➤ During all activities that may involve exposure to infectious blood and/or body substances i.e. cleaning rooms/bathrooms, managing used infectious cleaning equipment or infectious waste from a transmission precaution room/area ➤ When handling potentially or confirmed infectious materials/items or spills Choice: Nitrile gloves: ➤ During all cleaning activities that may involve exposure to blood and/or body substances of residents/individuals on cytotoxic medications (i.e. bathroom cleaning, spills) ➤ When in contact with cytotoxic contaminated items i.e. cytotoxic waste (i.e. Cytotoxic PPE, incontinence aids)
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When gloves are not used in cleaning/disinfection

Gloves are NOT indicated when performing the following tasks (except when required for transmission precautions):

Exposure type	Example
	➤ When damp dusting, vacuuming, moping common areas

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	➤ When damp dusting/tidying bedrooms (non-infectious) (not bathrooms) ➤ When moving furniture or items ➤ Restocking ➤ When in corridors ➤ When using the telephone ➤ When completing documentation
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When to change gloves in cleaning/disinfection

- After contact with blood or body substances
- Between areas i.e. bedrooms, bathrooms dining area, lounge area, foyer, lifts
- Between activities or tasks
- If gloves are damaged
- When hands become sweaty, to reduce the risk of dermatitis.

Overuse of gloves can:

- Increase HCW skin irritation or dermatitis
- Waste resources and raise costs
- Work against sustainability measures
- Result in missed hand hygiene opportunities

Hand hygiene is always required with glove use:

- Hand hygiene must be performed before putting on gloves
- Hand hygiene must be performed after removing gloves

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Glove Examples:

	Nitrile examination gloves
	Latex examination gloves
	Vinyl examination gloves
	Reusable utility gloves

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Technique for donning and removing non-sterile examination gloves

When the hand hygiene indication occurs before a contact requiring glove use, perform hand hygiene by rubbing with an alcohol-based handrub or by washing with soap and water.

I. HOW TO DON GLOVES:



1. Take out a glove from its original box



2. Touch only a restricted surface of the glove corresponding to the wrist (at the top edge of the cuff)



3. Don the first glove



4. Take the second glove with the bare hand and touch only a restricted surface of glove corresponding to the wrist



5. To avoid touching the skin of the forearm with the gloved hand, turn the external surface of the glove to be donned on the folded fingers of the gloved hand, thus permitting to glove the second hand

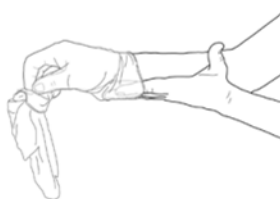


6. Once gloved, hands should not touch anything else that is not defined by indications and conditions for glove use

II. HOW TO REMOVE GLOVES:



1. Pinch one glove at the wrist level to remove it, without touching the skin of the forearm, and peel away from the hand, thus allowing the glove to turn inside out



2. Hold the removed glove in the gloved hand and slide the fingers of the ungloved hand inside between the glove and the wrist. Remove the second glove by rolling it down the hand and fold into the first glove



3. Discard the removed gloves

4. Then, perform hand hygiene by rubbing with an alcohol-based handrub or by washing with soap and water

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References, Resources and Inspiration

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