

Guideline at a Glance: Environmental Cleaning

The AORN Guideline at a Glance is a key component of the *Guideline Essentials*, a suite of online implementation tools designed to help the perioperative team translate AORN's evidence-based guidelines into practice. Each Guideline at a Glance highlights important elements of the full guideline and includes images, implementation steps, and the rationale for why these steps are important to promote safety and optimal outcomes for patients undergoing operative and other invasive procedures. Facilities can provide team access to the entire set of *Guideline Essentials* through a subscription to the multiuser, online edition (eSubscription) of the *AORN Guidelines for Perioperative Practice*. Individuals can obtain the same access through a subscription to the AORN Guideline eBook Mobile App. For more information about the complete set of implementation tools included in the *Guideline Essentials*, visit <https://www.aorn.org/guidelines/purchase-guidelines/guideline-essentials>.

CLEANING PROCEDURES

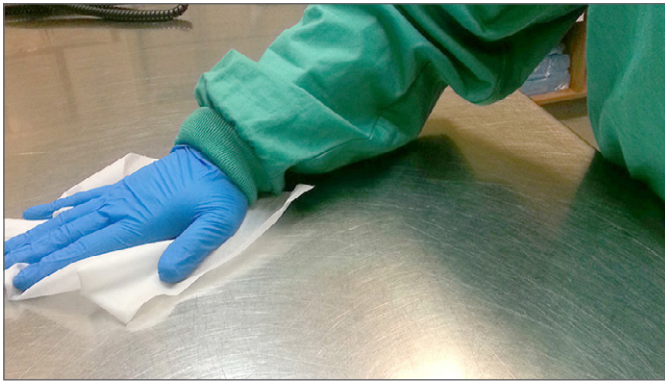
- Form a multidisciplinary team to establish cleaning and disinfection procedures and to select cleaning chemicals, materials, tools, and equipment.
- Designate personnel to be responsible for cleaning perioperative areas and equipment.
- Establish cleaning frequencies for high-touch objects and surfaces.
- Determine the frequency and extent of cleaning when areas are not occupied.
- Determine when enhanced environmental cleaning procedures should be implemented.

★ *Involvement of a multidisciplinary team (perioperative nursing, sterile processing, environmental services, infection prevention) allows input from personnel who perform environmental cleaning in perioperative areas and from personnel with expertise beyond clinical end-users.*

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Clean progressing from clean to dirty areas.
- Clean progressing from top to bottom areas.
- Clean clockwise or counter-clockwise in conjunction with clean-to-dirty and top-to-bottom methods.
- Use microfiber or low-linting cotton cleaning materials (reusable or single use).
- Use an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered disinfectant in the concentration indicated in the manufacturer's instructions for use (IFU).
- Do not use high-level disinfectants or liquid chemical sterilants to clean and disinfect environmental surfaces or noncritical devices.
- Do not use alcohol to disinfect large environmental surfaces.

★ *Cleaning an area in a methodical pattern establishes a routine so that items are not missed during the cleaning process.*



DAMP DUSTING

- Visually inspect the OR for cleanliness before case carts, supplies, and equipment are brought into the room.
- Damp dust all horizontal surfaces in the OR (furniture, surgical lights, booms, equipment) before the first scheduled surgical or other invasive procedure of the day.
- Complete damp dusting of the OR before case carts, supplies, and equipment are brought into the room.
- Use a clean, low-linting cloth moistened with an EPA-registered hospital-grade disinfectant to damp dust.
- Perform damp dusting methodically, from top to bottom.

★ *Dust is known to contain human skin and hair, fabric fibers, pollens, mold, fungi, insect parts, glove powder, and paper fibers. The purpose of damp dusting is to remove dust, not to perform surface disinfection, which is completed after each procedure and at terminal cleaning.*



PROVIDING A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

- Clean environmental surfaces with a detergent before disinfection, according to the manufacturers' IFU.
- If the cleaning chemical is removed from the original container, label the secondary container with the chemical name, concentration, and expiration date.
- Apply and reapply disinfectants as needed, for the dwell time required to kill the targeted microorganism.
- Do not use spray and misting methods (spray bottle) to apply cleaning chemicals.
- Mop floors with damp or wet mops. Do not use dry methods of environmental cleaning (dusting, sweeping) in semi-restricted and restricted areas.
- Disinfect noncritical items (safety straps, positioning devices) after contact with the floor.
- Change reusable cleaning materials after each use.
- Discard disposable cleaning materials after each use.
- Do not return used cleaning materials (mop heads, cloths) to the cleaning solution container.
- Clean and disinfect equipment before it is brought into the semi-restricted area.
- Disassemble cleaning equipment according to manufacturers' IFU. Clean, disinfect with an EPA-registered disinfectant, and dry the equipment before storage and reuse.

★ *If surfaces are not cleaned and disinfected, microorganisms may persist in the environment and may contaminate the hands of perioperative personnel or be deposited on or near a patient if the organism is uplifted by air currents.*

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