

Management of medical devices in a child care setting

How does this apply to child care centres?

There has been an increase in the use of medical devices in child care settings. Cleaning and disinfection of reusable medical devices can reduce the risk of transmission of infectious diseases.

Cleaning and disinfection of medical devices

Cleaning is the physical removal of debris from surfaces using detergent, water and friction. Disinfection is the process of killing most disease causing microorganisms using a chemical solution. To prevent the spread of disease causing microorganisms, follow the dedicated manufacturer's instructions for each medical device. If the medical device does not include manufacturer's instructions, ensure you speak with your public health inspector.

Single-use/Disposable:

A term given to medical equipment/devices designated by the manufacturer for single-use only. Refers to devices that cannot be re-used and must be discarded immediately after each use. Examples are EpiPens™, thermometer probe covers, finger stick devices (lancet), feeding tubes.

Single-use medical equipment/devices are usually labelled by the manufacturer with a symbol:



Reusable Medical Devices:

Devices that are reused must be cleaned and disinfected after each use. Examples are aerochambers, medication (oral) syringes, thermometers, finger stick devices (holder) and glucometers.

*Note that all examples above (except thermometers) must be client specific and should not be shared.



Cleaning and disinfection of reusable medical devices

Always follow these steps:

1. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after touching the device.
2. Discard all used single-use devices and accessories of the device. Discard any sharps into an approved sharps container.
3. Clean the reusable device with detergent and water or another product approved by the manufacturer. Allow drying time before disinfecting.
4. Disinfect device by following manufacturer's instructions for use and ensure appropriate contact time. Note that certain types of aerochambers require cleaning, but not disinfection, if reused by the same person.
5. Air dry/wipe medical device.
6. Store medical device in a clean, closed container to prevent potential contamination.

Other suggestions:

- When using a liquid disinfectant, follow the manufacturer's directions for use.
- Consider using disinfectant wipes that can do both cleaning and disinfection. Look for an active ingredient such as quaternary ammonium, chlorine, hydrogen peroxide or use 70% isopropyl alcohol wipes. Use double wipe method to clean and disinfect.
- Ensure staff are trained on the importance of cleaning and disinfection of medical devices on-site. Refer to parents, supervisor or manufacturer's instructions.
- Check manufacturer expiry dates.

Guide to developing a policy and procedure

- Create an inventory of all medical devices and single-use disposable accessories.
- Require hand hygiene.
- Document parent contact information.
- Provide and follow manufacturer's instructions for the cleaning and disinfection for each reusable medical device.
- Designate a cleaning and disinfection area.
- Designate storage area for medical devices.

