

Policies and Procedures

Title: Reprocessing Nursing Foot Care Instruments Using PREempt (7% Accelerated Hydrogen Peroxide)	
Effective Date: May 7, 2017 Rev. January 26, 2018 (AP/MP)	Number: 1.0 Foot Care Nova Scotia (A. Petten RN)

Policy

Instruments used in nursing foot care will be reprocessed using the chemosterilant PREempt CS20.

Background/Explanatory Notes

The intended use of *nursing foot care* instruments is with intact skin, at the level of the epidermis, which would typically classify them as *non-critical* according to the Spaulding Classification System for Medical Instruments. Despite using a comprehensive assessment and an appropriate conservative plan with actions, there remains a possibility of unintentionally entering the sterile space of the dermis. It is, therefore, prudent to at least reprocess these instruments as if they were *semi-critical* using *high level disinfection* because certain clients may be at higher risk for a negative outcome such as infection.

Guiding Principles/Assumptions

1. The intended use of an instrument determines its classification for reprocessing.
2. Instruments must be reprocessed at the recommended level and may be reprocessed at a higher level if compatible with the instruments.
3. Products such as cleaners, disinfectants, and chemosterilants are used according to manufacturers guidelines.

Expected Outcome

The risk of infection is minimized for clients and others.

Procedures

The sequential steps for reprocessing are preparing the reprocessing area for cleaning, cleaning, preparing the reprocessing area for sterilizing, sterilizing, and storing.

A: Preparing the Reprocessing Area (surface, sink, faucets) Prior to Cleaning:

1. Ensure area is well-lit.
2. Remove objects from the immediate area.
3. Clean surfaces using warm/hot water and cleaning agent.
4. Rinse with clean water.
5. Dry using a clean towel or allow to air dry.

B: Cleaning

1. Discard all disposable pieces.
2. Perform hand hygiene by washing hands with soap and water or 70% alcohol-based hand sanitizer for 15- 20 seconds. Dry fully.
3. Don clean Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) of eye protection and gloves.
4. Clean all reusable metal and glass instruments meticulously using instrument cleaner (e.g. Miltex Surgical Instrument Cleaner) and water or enzymatic cleaner. Scrub with a soft, nylon-bristled brush with hinges both opened and closed while submerged in lukewarm water to minimize splashing. If not reprocessing immediately, soak instruments in instrument cleaner solution for 10-20 minutes before cleaning. Alternatively, spray with enzymatic transport product and store in a closed container for cleaning later that day. Clean as per above.
5. Rinse thoroughly with potable water to remove all residual detergent and loosened organic debris.
6. Dry instruments completely with an absorbent, lint-free towel or air dry. This is to avoid dilution of PREempt CS20.
7. Inspect instruments for cleanliness and defects.

C: Preparing the Reprocessing Area (surface, sink, faucets) Prior to High Level Disinfection/Sterilization:

1. Complete steps of Preparation of Reprocessing Environment Prior to Cleaning.
2. Disinfect using wipes/spray and cloth (e.g. Accel TB, BioTEXT).

D: Sterilizing

1. Don PPE of eye protection and gloves.
2. Prepare a resealable, labelled tray (stainless steel, ceramic, glass, or hard plastic) with a lid containing a sufficient volume of PREempt CS20 to cover instruments.
3. Separate dissimilar metals for reprocessing to avoid corrosion and staining.
4. Immerse instruments with hinges fully opened into the solution, ensuring space between instruments.
5. Document time of immersion in Reprocessing Log (see Appendix A).
6. Remove promptly after 20 minutes to minimize degradation of the instruments. Use clean, dry gloves, forceps or tongs.
7. Document time of removal in Reprocessing Log (see Appendix A).
8. Rinse instruments thoroughly with potable water.
9. Dry instruments with an absorbent, lint-free towel or air dry in a contaminant free area.
10. Inspect instrument sets for any defect or contamination prior to storage.

E: Storing

1. Wrap dry, reprocessed instruments in a clean towel with an elastic band and place in a resealable plastic bag. Alternatively, use self-sealing pouches that are appropriately sized. Store in a clean, dry location.

Definitions

Nursing is regulated by the Colleges of Licensed Practical Nurses and Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia. Nurses adhere to the Standards of Practice and Codes of Ethics and follow guidelines when provided by their regulatory bodies and the provincial Department of Health and Wellness. **Nursing foot care** includes:

- a comprehensive assessment of general health, the lower limb and footwear
- noninvasive care at the level of the epidermis such as trimming and/or filing nails, reduction of thick nails, reduction or removal of corns and/or calluses and hygienic skin care.
- an emphasis on measures to prevent foot related problems
- an emphasis on client education
- referral to and /or collaboration with other health professionals e.g. MD, NP, podiatrist, pedorthist, physiotherapist, osteopath and others

Reprocessing - the cleaning, disinfection, and/or sterilization procedures necessary to render used medical equipment/devices ready for use

Cleaning - the removal of foreign and organic material; usually using water, detergent, and friction

Disinfecting - the reduction of the number of microorganisms (low level and high level microorganisms)

Sterilizing - the destruction or elimination of all forms of microorganisms

Spaulding Classification System

Non-critical - intended to either not touch client or contact only intact skin; require cleaning

Semi-critical medical devices - intended for use with non-intact skin or mucus membranes and does not ordinarily penetrate sterile tissue (non-invasive); require cleaning and high-level disinfection

Critical medical devices -intended to enter sterile spaces (invasive); require cleaning, sterilization and to be kept sterile to the point of use

References

Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines for Foot Care Instruments (2017). *Virox Technologies Inc.* www.virox.com

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