

Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene remains one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of infection.

Understanding your 4 Moments for Hand Hygiene:

1. Before contact with person/environment
2. Before aseptic procedure (e.g., blood test, mouth care)
3. After risk of body fluid contact (e.g., after aseptic procedure, toileting assistance)
4. After contact with person/environment

Challenges of Effective Hand Hygiene Compliance in CSS:

- Hand hygiene is the single most effective way to prevent transmission of infection
- Best practice and accreditation require evidence that hand hygiene is being performed and tracked as an IPAC quality indicator
- CSS differ from hospitals, long-term care, and retirement homes in that there may be:
- Less opportunities: Little or no 'direct care' (e.g., prompting, counselling – maybe in an office)
- Fewer staff: Less people to watch or be watched.

IPAC CANADA Position Statements and Practice Recommendations

Click the link below to access IPAC Canada's comprehensive collection of position statements and practice recommendations. These resources offer evidence-informed guidance to support safe practices, strengthen infection prevention and control measures, and help healthcare providers stay up to date with current standards.

[Click here to view.](#)

Catch up on past IPAC webinars

Did you miss a past session or want to revisit a topic? Our past webinar recordings are available on our IPAC page.

[Click here to view.](#)

Are you using the right disinfectant?

In healthcare and congregate living environments, the use of a healthcare-grade disinfectant is required. This may be in the form of a combined cleaner-disinfectant product or applied as a second step following the cleaning process.

A healthcare-grade disinfectant must demonstrate efficacy against a broad spectrum of microorganisms, including bacteria, viruses, and fungi.

All disinfectants must possess a valid Drug Identification Number (DIN) issued by Health Canada. Disinfectants are categorized based on their intended application:

- **Low-level disinfectants:** Used for non-critical surfaces and equipment that contact intact skin only.
- **High-level disinfectants:** Required for equipment that comes into contact with non-intact skin or mucous membranes.

Low-level disinfectants should be selected based on their specific organism "kill claims." Certain pathogens require targeted efficacy, such as:

- Non-enveloped viruses (e.g., norovirus)
- Mycobacteria (e.g., tuberculosis)
- Bacterial spores (e.g., *Clostridioides difficile*)

Contact time is a critical factor in product selection. Choosing a disinfectant with a shorter required wet contact time (e.g., 1–3 minutes versus 5–10 minutes) improves compliance, as surfaces must remain visibly wet for the entire specified duration to achieve effective microbial kill.

Additional considerations when selecting a disinfectant include material compatibility with the intended surface, occupational health and safety factors (e.g., irritation to skin, eyes, or respiratory tract), and overall environmental impact.