

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CENTERS FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES (CMS) TAG F441

WHAT IS CENTERS FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SERVICES (CMS) TAG F441?

(CMS) Tag F441 is the interpretive guidelines for infection control programs for Long Term Care facilities (LTCF). This document is used for guidance by the surveyors to investigate compliance of F441 for every initial certification and recertification survey, as well as during complaint investigations.

WHY IS CLEANING AND DISINFECTION OF BLOOD GLUCOSE METERS SUCH A HIGH PRIORITY?

Blood glucose meters are at high risk of becoming contaminated with bloodborne pathogens such as Hepatitis B virus (HBV), Hepatitis C virus (HCV) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). Transmission of these viruses from resident to resident has been documented due to contaminated blood glucose devices. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, cleaning and disinfection of meters between resident uses can prevent transmission of these viruses through indirect contact.

DOES (CMS) TAG F441 ONLY APPLY TO BLOOD GLUCOSE METERS?

No, Tag F441 refers to the establishment of an infection prevention and control program for LTCF. All equipment and environmental surfaces are subject to cleaning and disinfection guidelines.

WHAT IS A NON-CRITICAL DEVICE?

Non-critical items (e.g. stethoscopes, over-bed tables, etc.) are defined as those objects that come into contact with intact skin or do not contact the resident. They require low level disinfection by cleaning periodically and disinfecting with an EPA registered disinfectant detergent that is labeled for use in a health care setting.

IF THE GLUCOSE METER IS NOT SHARED BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND EACH RESIDENT HAS THEIR OWN METER, DOES IT HAVE TO BE CLEANED AND DISINFECTED AFTER EACH USE?

Yes, small non-disposable equipment such as glucose meters, scissors, and thermometers must be cleaned and appropriately disinfected after each use for individual resident care to prevent possible cross contamination.

IS ALCOHOL ACCEPTABLE FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTING BLOOD GLUCOSE METERS?

No, alcohol is not approved for disinfecting environmental areas potentially contaminated with blood.

WHAT IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE PRODUCT TO USE FOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTING BLOOD GLUCOSE METERS?

When cleaning a glucose meter or any object potentially contaminated with blood, use either an EPA registered disinfectant which is labeled effective against TB or HBV, HCV, and HIV or a 1:10 bleach to water concentration.

CAN ONE WIPE BE USED TO CLEAN AND DISINFECT A BLOOD GLUCOSE METER?

Regardless of which product is used, all surfaces if visibly soiled need to be physically cleaned to remove gross soil with one wipe and then a second wipe to disinfect the surface.

WHAT IS MEANT BY CONTACT TIME?

Contact time is the total time needed for the disinfectant solution to remain wet on the surface to achieve disinfection of all the stated efficacy kill claims. The contact time can be located on the product's label.

MY CUSTOMER IS TELLING ME THAT THEY CAN ONLY USE BLEACH FOR THE BLOOD GLUCOSE METERS. HOW DO I RESPOND?

A 1:10 bleach solution may be used but is not required by the Tag F441. Any EPA registered disinfectant product which is labeled effective against TB, HBV, HCV, and HIV is appropriate for use. Disinfectant products must be compatible with the blood glucose device itself. Adherence to the specific device manufacturer's cleaning and disinfection protocol is very important. PDI® Super Sani-Cloth® and Sani-Cloth® Plus meets the requirements set forth by CMS to effectively inactivate HBV, HCV, HIV.

ARE THE PDI® GERMICIDAL WIPE PRODUCTS ON THE EPA WEBSITE?

Yes, both the Super Sani-Cloth® Germicidal Disposable Wipe and the Sani-Cloth® Plus Germicidal Disposable Cloth are listed on the EPA website. They can be located on the EPA germicidal lists by EPA registration number. Super Sani-Cloth® is EPA registration #9480-4 and Sani-Cloth® Plus is #9480-6.