



## *Avoiding Hazards with Using Cleaners and Disinfectants on Electronic Medical Equipment I*

The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) collaborated with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Environmental Protection Agency, and OSHA to develop a notification regarding cleaning electronic medical equipment. The full text is available at [www.fda.gov/cdrh/safety/103107-cleaners.html](http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/safety/103107-cleaners.html).

One goal of cleaning is to disinfect frequently touched surfaces to stop cross-transmission of infections. In this context cleaning includes disinfection and decontamination. Surface and equipment may be contaminated with blood and other potentially infectious materials (OPIMs), such as;

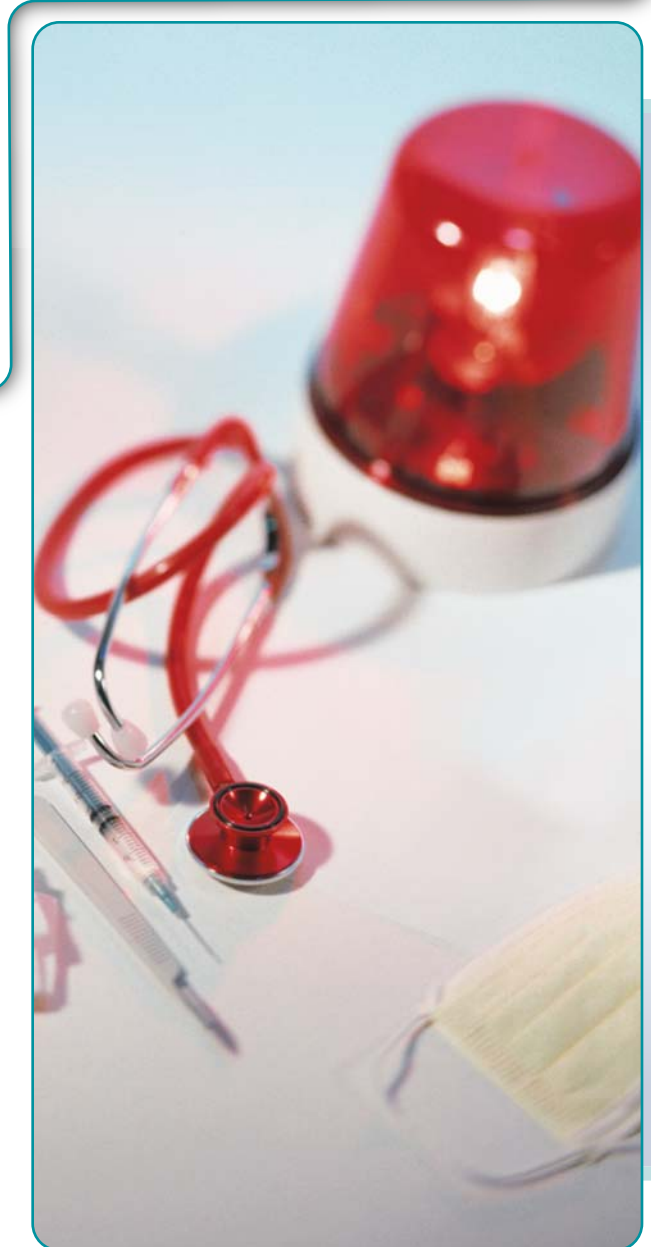


- Semen
- Vaginal secretions
- Respiratory secretions
- Fecal material
- Cerebrospinal fluid
- Pleural fluid
- Pericardial fluid
- Amniotic fluid
- Saliva in dental procedures and others as specified in OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1030

When surfaces and equipment are directly and obviously contaminated with blood or OPIMs, the need for cleaning is easy to identify. But do we always recognize that items touched by gloved hands after the patient is touched, things touched by patients, and things contacted by aerosols or splatter also need cleaning? Do we do an inspection and transport reconstruction at the end of each call to determine what needs to be cleaned? For example, if a patient sneezes on a cabinet door, do we think that it should be cleaned? Do we clean our stethoscopes between patients?

In addition to the body substance isolation (BSI) techniques during direct client contact, we must use proper cleaning techniques to maintain a safe work environment. This includes medical electronic equipment. Unfortunately, the use of improper cleaning techniques and liquids has resulted in equipment fires, equipment malfunctions, and healthcare worker burns. The equipment malfunctions have the potential to create life-threatening events for patients.

Common devices involved include: infusion pumps, ventilators, analgesia pumps, telemetry receivers and transmitters, infusion fluid warmers, and any device that has any unsealed electronic circuitry or components. The root cause of the problem, corrosion of the electronic circuitry, resulted from spraying the housing of such devices with cleansers that do not meet the manufacturer recommendation.



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