



Resource Guide

Subject:	Antiseptic Hand Cleaners
Facility Site Review Source:	
Relevant Law/Standard:	Infection control procedures for Standard/Universal precautions are followed.
Agency/Organization Source:	7 CFR § 3201.18 - Hand cleaners and sanitizers.
Agency/Organization URL	https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/

Background:

Health care antiseptics are not only used to protect the patient but also to protect the user.

Purpose:

- Soap or Antiseptic Hand Cleaner: Hand washing prevents infection transmission by removing dirt, organic material and transient microorganisms from hands. Hand washing with plain (non-antimicrobial) soap in any form (e.g., bar, leaflet, liquid, powder, granular) is acceptable for general patient care (Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc., 1995).
- Antimicrobial agents or alcohol-based antiseptic hand rubs are used for hand washing when indicated to remove debris and destroy transient microorganisms (e.g., before performing invasive procedures, after contact with potentially infectious materials). Plain and antiseptic hand wash products are properly maintained and/or dispensed to prevent contamination.

Definitions:

Hand cleaners are products formulated for personal care use in removing a variety of different soils, greases, and similar substances from human hands with or without the use of water. (7 CFR § 3201.18 - Hand cleaners and sanitizers.)

Hand sanitizers are products formulated for personal care use in removing bacteria from human hands with or without the use of water. Personal care products that are formulated for use in removing a variety of different soils, greases and similar substances and bacteria from human hands with or without the use of water are classified as hand sanitizers for the purposes of this rule. (7 CFR § 3201.18 - Hand cleaners and sanitizers.)

Standard Precautions (CDC, 1996) are used for all patients regardless of infection status. Standard precautions apply to blood, all body fluids, non-intact skin, and mucous membranes, which are treated as potentially infectious for HIV, HBV or HCV, and other bloodborne pathogens.

Universal Precautions (OSHA mandated program) implementation of work practice controls, engineering controls, bloodborne pathogen orientation/education, and record keeping in healthcare facilities.

Procedure:

- On occasions when running water is not readily available, an antiseptic hand cleanser, alcohol-based hand rub, or antiseptic towelettes is acceptable until running water is available (29 CFR 1919.1030).
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that staff wash their hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer, especially after coughing or sneezing.

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