



Practice Briefs

Is it true that when a facility has patients/residents with *Clostridium difficile* or Norovirus, a special type of disinfectant is required after cleaning?

YES

There are special instructions for blood spills or when certain microorganisms (e.g., *Clostridium difficile* and norovirus) are known to be present in the environment.

When an outbreak (or consistent high rates) of *Clostridium difficile* is suspected or confirmed, special instructions for cleaning and disinfection need to be followed. This is because the organism produces spores that can live in the environment for many months and these spores are highly resistant to cleaning and disinfection. During a suspected outbreak, first clean the area or objects (i.e., wash and scrub using a detergent). Then disinfect the area or objects using a diluted bleach solution (1:10 dilution or 1 part bleach to 9 parts water that is prepared daily). A diluted bleach solution is recommended because no EPA-registered disinfectant is specific for inactivating *Clostridium difficile* spores. Allow a contact time of one minute by thoroughly wetting the surface with the diluted bleach solution and then allowing it to air dry.

When norovirus is suspected or confirmed, diluted bleach with a minimum concentration of 1:50 and a contact time of one minute is recommended. However, bleach is substantially and quickly inactivated in the presence of organic matter. In areas with high levels of soiling and resistant surfaces, a 1:10 diluted bleach solution and a contact time of up to 10 minutes may be necessary.

Diluted bleach solutions should be prepared daily and any unused portions should be discarded. If diluted solutions cannot be made daily, they can be stored at room temperature for up to 30 days in an opaque plastic bottle. However, it is important to note that the stored solution will have a 50% decrease in concentration after 30 days of storage.

(Follow food code instructions regarding final rinse recommendation if diluted bleach is used in a food preparation or holding area).

Resources:

Virginia Department of Health has a great fact sheet that you can access which gives further information on cleaning and disinfecting. You can access it here <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/3/2016/03/Environmental-Cleaning-Fact-Sheet.pdf>. Accessed 3.29.18

Clinical Practice Guidelines for *Clostridium difficile* Infection in Adults and Children: 2017 Update by the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) and Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA) L Clifford McDonald et al. <https://www.shea-online.org/index.php/practice-resources/41-current-guidelines/574-clinical-practice-guidelines-for-clostridium-difficile-infection-in-adults-and-children-2017-update-by-idsa-shea>. Accessed 3.29.18

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