Environmental Cleaning & Disinfecting for MRSA

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What's the difference between cleaners, sanitizers, and disinfectants?

- Cleaners or detergents are products that are used to remove soil, dirt, dust, organic matter, and germs (like bacteria, viruses, and fungi). Cleaners or detergents work by washing the surface to lift dirt and germs off surfaces so they can be rinsed away with water. The same thing happens when you wash your hands with soap and water or when you wash dishes. Rinsing is an important part of the cleaning process. Use these products for routine cleaning of surfaces.
- Sanitizers are used to reduce germs from surfaces but not totally get rid of them. Sanitizers reduce the germs from surfaces to levels that are considered safe.
- Disinfectants are chemical products that destroy or inactivate germs and prevent them from growing. Disinfectants have no effect on dirt, soil, or dust. Disinfectants are regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). You can use a disinfectant after cleaning for surfaces that have visible blood or drainage from infected skin.

Which disinfectants should I use against MRSA

Read the label first. Each cleaner and disinfectant has instructions on the label that tell you important facts.

Disinfectants effective against Staphylococcus aureus or staph are most likely also effective against MRSA. These products are readily available from grocery stores and other retail stores. Check the disinfectant product's label on the back of the container. Most, if not all, disinfectant manufacturers will provide a list of germs on their label that their product can destroy. Use disinfectants that are

registered by the EPA (http://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/selected-epa-registered-disinfectants) (check for an EPA registration number on the product's label to confirm that it is registered).

How should cleaners and disinfectants be used?

Read the label first. Each cleaner and disinfectant has instructions on the label that tell you important facts:

- How to apply the product to a surface.
- How long you need to leave it on the surface to be effective (contact time).
- If the surface needs to be cleaned first and rinsed after using.
- If the disinfectant is safe for the surface.
- Whether the product requires dilution with water before use.
- Precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves or aprons or making sure you have good ventilation during application.

Laundry

Routine laundry procedures, detergents, and laundry additives will all help to make clothes, towels, and linens safe to wear or touch. If items have been contaminated by infectious material, these may be laundered separately, but this is not absolutely necessary.

More about laundry… (laundry.html)

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Facility Cleaning & Disinfection after a MRSA Infection

When MRSA skin infections occur, cleaning and disinfection should be performed on surfaces that are likely to contact uncovered or poorly covered infections.

- Cleaning surfaces with detergent-based cleaners or Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) -registered disinfectants is effective at removing MRSA from the environment.
- It is important to read the instruction labels on all cleaners to make sure they are used safely and appropriately.
- Environmental cleaners and disinfectants should not be used to treat infections.
- The EPA provides a list of EPA-registered products effective against MRSA (http://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/selected-epa-registered-disinfectants)

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Surfaces to Clean

Focus on surfaces that touch people's bare skin each day and any surfaces that could come into contact with uncovered infections. For example, surfaces such as benches in a weight room or locker room.

Large surfaces such as floors and walls have not been directly associated in the spread of staph and MRSA.

There is no evidence that spraying or fogging rooms or surfaces with disinfectants will prevent MRSA infections more effectively than the targeted approach of cleaning frequently touched surfaces and any surfaces that have been exposed to infections.

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Shared Equipment

Shared equipment that comes into direct skin contact should be cleaned after each use and allowed to dry. Equipment, such as helmets and protective gear, should be cleaned according to the equipment manufacturers' instructions to make sure the cleaner will not harm the item.

More about Cleaning & Disinfecting Athletic Facilities for MRSA… (athletic-facilities.html)

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Cleaning Keyboards and other Difficult Surfaces

Many items such as computer keyboards or handheld electronic devices may be difficult to clean or disinfect or they could be damaged if they became wet. If these items are touched by many people during the course of the day, a cleanable cover/skin could be used on the item to allow for cleaning while protecting the item. Always check to see if the manufacturer has instructions for cleaning.

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Is it Clean?

Although in most situations you will not know if a surface has been cleaned, it's important to remember that most surfaces do not pose a risk of spreading MRSA. If cleaning procedures are unknown, take the appropriate precautions such as:

- Using barriers like a towel or clothing between your skin and the surface.
- Showering immediately after activities where you have direct skin contact with people or shared surfaces, such as after exercising at a health club.
- Cleaning your hands regularly.
- Keeping cuts and scrapes clean and covered with bandages or dressing until healed.

These precautions are especially important in settings such as in locker rooms, gyms, and health clubs.

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