

Accepted Cleaning Terms and Definitions List

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Cleaning terms and definitions

Term	Meaning
Cleaning and Disinfection	
Cleaning	The physical removal of foreign material, e.g., dust, soil, and organic material such as blood, secretions, excretions, microorganisms. Cleaning physically removes rather than kills microorganisms. It is accomplished with water, detergents, and mechanical action.
Disinfecting	The inactivation of disease-producing microorganisms. Disinfection does not destroy bacterial spores.
Types of Cleaning	
Routine cleaning	Cleaning and disinfecting of a patient room/space with no additional precautions in place. The patient room/space may be occupied or empty, i.e., discharge/transfer.
Isolation/Additional Precautions	Cleaning and disinfecting of a patient room/space with additional precautions in place. The patient room/space may be occupied or empty, i.e., discharge/transfer.
Sporicidal cleaning	Cleaning and disinfecting of a patient room/space when contact-sporicidal additional precautions are in place. This involves using a sporicidal disinfectant, e.g., a sodium hypochlorite product. The patient/room space maybe occupied or empty, i.e., discharge /transfer.
Application of Cleaning	
Between-case cleaning (also known as end of procedure or change-over cleaning)	Cleaning and disinfecting performed between each patient in various settings, e.g., surgical services, endoscopy, interventional radiology, emergency room and community procedures.
End-of-day cleaning	Cleaning and disinfecting performed after the last patient of the day in various settings, e.g., surgical services, endoscopy, interventional radiology, and community procedures.
Discharge/transfer cleaning	Cleaning and disinfecting of a patient room/space following discharge, death or transfer of the patient.
Occupied cleaning	Cleaning and disinfecting of an occupied patient room/space.
Enhanced cleaning (also known as outbreak cleaning)	Cleaning targeted areas at a higher than normal frequency. It is typically required during an outbreak or known, suspected ongoing micro-organism transmission.

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Term	Meaning
High dusting	The dusting of horizontal surfaces and fixtures that are out of reach, including vents and ceilings.
High-touch surface cleaning	Cleaning and disinfecting a surface where hands have frequent contact. Examples include doorknobs, call bells, telephones, bedrails, light switches, wall areas around the toilet and walls used for mobility and stability.
Project cleaning	The cleaning of specific surfaces or areas that are outside of daily and weekly work routines. The frequency of project cleans will be determined in consultation with affected departments or areas.
Sanitizing	Treating a surface in such a way, i.e., applying substances called sanitizers, to reduce the microorganism population to an acceptable level but does not disinfect. Sanitizing is typically used in food handling areas and on food contact surfaces.
Construction Cleaning	
Post-construction clean	A complete clean performed by the construction workers who will remove all construction equipment, supplies, materials, and workplace hazards. Cleaning includes removing debris, gross soils and dirt from floors, walls, horizontal and vertical spaces as well as the clearing of debris in vents.
Return-to-service clean (also known as clinical clean)	The cleaning and disinfecting of a healthcare space, area or room by environmental services following the completion of a post-construction clean.

References

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3. AHS Infection Prevention and Control. Revised 2020. [Principles for Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection](#).
4. Alberta Food Retail and Foodservices Code. Revised 2020. Retrieved from <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/food-retail-and-foodservices-code>.
5. Alberta Public Health Act – Food Regulation. Revised 2020. Retrieved from http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Regs/2006_031.pdf.
6. Canadian Standards Association. CSA Z317.12:20 Cleaning and disinfection of health care facilities.

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