

# Laundering Personal Patient Items in Washing Machine

**Note:** If you have any questions or comments contact IPC at [ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca](mailto:ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca).

Refer to [Learning About Washing Soiled Clothes and Linens](#) for more detail.

Reduce the risk of contamination by careful handling and limiting direct touching of soiled items.

For example:

- Protect hands and clothing, e.g., with gloves and gown.
- Roll or fold item to contain the heaviest soil and place directly in a bag or dedicated hamper to transport.
- If necessary, wipe easily removed stool using a gloved hand into the toilet before placing in the washing machine.
- Wash hands with soap and water.



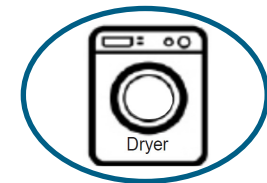
- Launder patient items separately from other laundry.
- Launder slings and lift straps according to manufacturer instructions if site procedures allow.
- Follow washing machine instructions for loading and operating.
- Use hot water wash cycle unless using a cold water detergent.
- Follow detergent instructions for load size and load soiling. Measure detergent with measuring cup provided or use pre-measured amount, e.g., detergent pod.



- Use complete/full wash and rinse cycles. Heavy soiling may require additional prewash cycles.
- Clean surfaces touched by soiled items, e.g., use a cloth moistened with disinfectant.
- Perform hand hygiene before handling clean linen.



- Clean hands using hand sanitizer (an alcohol-based hand rub) or soap and water before removing clean laundry from washing machine.
- Place clean laundry in the dryer or hang in a clean area to dry.
- Clean hands before folding laundry on a clean surface.



For heavily soiled loads of linen or if patient is on additional precautions:

- Run empty washer with 1 chlorine disinfectant tablet; 1 cup of chlorine bleach; or follow label if it differs from this general guidance.
- Use and store chlorine bleach tablets following the product's posted safety data sheet.

