

# Key Points for Ready-to-Use (RTU) Pre-moistened Disinfectant Wipes

**Note:** This best practice recommendation was developed by the Infection Prevention and Control Document Revision Working Group in consultation with Contracting, Procurement and Supply Management (CPSM) representatives.  
If you have any questions or comments contact IPC at [ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca](mailto:ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca).

- Support patient safety by outlining key points for the use of ready-to-use pre-moistened disinfectant wipes for cleaning and disinfecting non-critical patient equipment as indicated by the equipment manufacturer.
- Inform users of changes that may impact the supply of disinfectant products.
- Provide recommendations about managing changes in disinfectant supplies.
- Answer the question about whether one wipe can be used to perform cleaning and disinfection.

## Best practice recommendations

### Instructions

1. **RTU pre-moistened disinfectant wipes** may be used for point-of-care cleaning and disinfecting of non-critical patient equipment as indicated by the equipment manufacturer.
2. Clean visible soil from non-critical patient equipment before disinfection.
3. Use RTU wipes for intended purposes only, e.g., never use on skin. Reports of damage to medical devices due to liquid leaking into the device through seams and crevices are increasing. Follow these recommendations for applying disinfectant to medical devices:
  - Use approved surface disinfectant, i.e., a pre-moistened disinfectant wipe, or a dry wipe moistened with RTU liquid disinfectant to clean and disinfect medical devices.
  - Follow manufacturer's instructions for use (MIFU) and cleaning instructions.
  - Squeeze out excess liquid from the wipe before using.
  - Avoid over-saturation of the device. Never spray or pour products directly onto medical or electronic devices, as it may damage the device.
4. After use, discard RTU wipes into regular garbage. Never dispose wipes into toilets or automated cleaner/disinfectors because they can clog the sewer systems causing blockages and damage.
5. Rotate stock of RTU disinfectant wipes. Ensure the container for RTU disinfectant wipes is properly closed, stored and used before the expiry date.
6. Check open containers to make sure the pre-moistened RTU wipes have not dried out and discard if they become dry. Do not add liquid to re-wet dried out wipes.
7. Clean the exterior of visibly soiled containers.
8. Read and follow the instructions on the label including the contact time and the time a disinfectant must remain wet on a surface to be effective.

### Supply changes and substitutions

1. Supply chain issues are occurring with RTU pre-moistened disinfectant wipes and substitutions may occur. All AHS provided disinfectants are equally effective against COVID-19 and other microorganisms.
2. During the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Contracting, Procurement and Supply Management (CPSM) may substitute similar ready-to-use pre-moistened disinfectant wipes or RTU liquid with dry wipes

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in place of the ones currently being used in your area. Refer to [Interim Disinfectant Substitution Products during COVID-19 Pandemic](#).

- 2.1. All above key points for RTU pre-moistened disinfectant wipes apply to substitutes.
3. In the event that CPSM substitutes a disinfectant that requires point-of-use preparation the following apply:
  - 3.1. Areas need to determine who will manage the new process, e.g., assign responsibility for the point-of-use preparation and storage of the disinfectant.
  - 3.2. Choose a secure, clean location outside of a patient care space for the point-of-use preparation and storage. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for expiry and storage.
  - 3.3. Label the point-of-use preparation. Labelling includes a Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) label and a product preparation or expiry date. The product label may be provided by the vendor or already on the vendor supplied container. Follow manufacturer's instruction for prepared shelf life (expiry date).
  - 3.4. Check that the wipe or cloth used is compatible with the disinfectant. Cotton-based cloths and some microfibre cloths may bind to the active ingredient of the cleaning or disinfection product and the cloth retains the chemical causing inadequate exposure of the surface to the product, e.g., quaternary ammonium compound (QUAT) and "QUAT binding."

### Can one RTU pre-moistened disinfectant wipe be used for both cleaning and disinfection steps?

- Yes, a single RTU pre-moistened disinfectant wipe can be used to clean and disinfect a surface/device when the product label indicates it can be used for both cleaning and disinfection.
  1. Follow product label, e.g., contact time, required personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves.
  2. Keep lids closed to maintain wipe integrity, e.g., wetness.
  3. Pre-moistened RTU wipes with both cleaning and disinfection claims are specifically designed for this application and prevent soiling permeating from one side to the other.
    - Use one side of the wipe to clean the surface and the other side of the wipe to disinfect.
    - Teach staff how to fold/unfold the saturated wipe to expose a clean portion for each step, e.g., wipe to clean and fold or turn over to the opposite side for the second wipe to disinfect.
  4. Factors to consider when determining number of wipes to use:
    - size of item to be cleaned and disinfected;
    - amount and condition of visible soil, e.g., easy to remove or dried on;
    - size of wipe, e.g., the wipe is large enough to clean the surface and keep it wet for required contact time to achieve disinfection;
    - appropriateness to task, e.g., RTU wipes can be used to clean smaller areas of the patient environment or to clean and disinfect non-critical medical devices but are not suitable for tasks that require large quantities of disinfectant such as general room cleaning, e.g., walls, areas outside of the immediate patient environment;
    - adequacy of supply of RTU disinfectant wipes;
    - education and training of staff.

**Note:** Site/Zone discretion applies. Outbreak conditions and Public Health directives may impact how cleaning and disinfection is completed.

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## Rationale

- It is consistent with the IPC [Best Practice Recommendations for Cleaning and Disinfection](#) (Section 4.3): “Where a disinfectant claims to have both cleaning and disinfecting properties, the product may be used for both steps (following manufacturer’s instructions).”
- Pre-moistened RTU wipes are intended for both cleaning and disinfection and preventing soil from penetrating through one side of the wipe to the other. The cleaner/disinfectant formulation includes cleaning properties to facilitate cleaning as well as disinfectant requirements.

## Definitions

**Non-critical** means equipment or device that either touches only intact skin (but not mucous membranes) or does not directly touch the patient. Reprocessing of non-critical equipment or devices involves cleaning and may also require low-level disinfection, e.g., blood pressure cuffs, stethoscopes.

**Point-of-use preparation** means a container of disposable wipes for use with a ready-to-use liquid disinfectant at the appropriate concentration is provided by the manufacturer and added to the container to moisten wipes.

**Ready-to-use pre-moistened disinfectant wipes** means wipes that are: AHS provided, pre-mixed at the appropriate concentration, saturated with disinfectant, e.g., enhanced hydrogen peroxide or bleach or hypochlorite, and used to clean and/or disinfect the patient environment or equipment.




## Related IPC Resources

- [Principles for Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection](#)
- [Cleaning and Disinfection during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Addressing Disinfectant Supply Challenges](#)
- [Cleaning and Disinfection Products Supplied to Community Settings during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [New Products and Technology](#)
- [Product Distribution Priorities, Disinfectant Options and Communication during Supply Disruptions in the Pandemic](#)

## References

1. Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario), Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee. Best practices for environmental cleaning for prevention and control of infections in all health care settings. 3rd ed. Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for Ontario; 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/bp-environmental-cleaning.pdf>.

## Examples of ready-to-use pre-moistened disinfectant wipes

Product name	Product image
Accel INTERvention™ RTU Wipes	
Accel PREvention™ RTU WIPES	
Caviwipes™ RTU	

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