

Personal Service Facilities: Using 70% Isopropyl Alcohol for Disinfection

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

70% Isopropyl alcohol is listed in Alberta's 2002 Health Standards and Guidelines as an example of an intermediate-level disinfectant. However, this product is not a registered disinfectant in Canada and as such it does not come with instructions for use as a disinfectant.

Environmental Health Officers prefer that operators in personal service settings use registered disinfectants to decontaminate their instruments. The use of 70% Isopropyl alcohol as an intermediate disinfectant should be discussed with your local public health inspector and operators may only use it when the following steps are taken.

STEPS TO TAKE WHEN USING 70% ALCOHOL

1. Instruments must be fully cleaned, rinsed and then dried before immersion into alcohol.
2. Never add water to alcohol. Use the full strength from the bottle.
3. Pre-cleaned instruments must be immersed for a minimum of 10 minutes, but no longer than 30 minutes.
4. Bulk isopropyl alcohol solutions must be clearly labeled as being 70%.
5. Isopropyl alcohol solutions must be changed daily since its efficacy and strength cannot be verified by the operator or the inspector.
6. Containers for isopropyl alcohol solutions must be cleaned, rinsed and dried each time the old solution has been discarded.

FACILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Containers for immersion should be located near the sink so that staff are not tempted to place dirty tools into jars of alcohol at the workstation.
- Alcohol is flammable so be sure to store your supplies of alcohol in a safe place in your facility.
- Ensure that staff and clients are protected from alcohol fumes when they handle the product.

For more information, please contact your nearest Environmental Public Health office.

Edmonton Main Office
Calgary Main Office
Lethbridge Main Office

780-735-1800
403-943-2295
403-388-6689

Grande Prairie Main Office
Red Deer Main Office
www.albertahealthservices.ca/eph.asp

780-513-7517
403-356-6366

3EPHB-14-001
Created: Nov/14