Executive Summary

Guideline for Disinfection and Sterilization in Healthcare Facilities (2008)

AT A GLANCE

Executive summary from the Guideline for Disinfection and Sterilization in Healthcare Facilities (2008).

Executive Summary

The Guideline for Disinfection and Sterilization in Healthcare Facilities, 2008, presents evidence-based recommendations on the preferred methods for cleaning, disinfection and sterilization of patient-care medical devices and for cleaning and disinfecting the healthcare environment. This document supercedes the relevant sections contained in the 1985 Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Guideline for Handwashing and Environmental Control. [1]Because maximum effectiveness from disinfection and sterilization results from first cleaning and removing organic and inorganic materials, this document also reviews cleaning methods. The chemical disinfectants discussed for patient-care equipment include alcohols, glutaraldehyde, formaldehyde, hydrogen peroxide, iodophors, *ortho*-phthalaldehyde, peracetic acid, phenolics, quaternary ammonium compounds, and chlorine. The choice of disinfectant, concentration, and exposure time is based on the risk for infection associated with use of the equipment and other factors discussed in this guideline. The sterilization methods discussed include steam sterilization, ethylene oxide (ETO), hydrogen peroxide gas plasma, and liquid peracetic acid. When properly used, these cleaning, disinfection, and sterilization processes can reduce the risk for infection associated with use of invasive and noninvasive medical and surgical devices. However, for these processes to be effective, health-care workers should adhere strictly to the cleaning, disinfection, and sterilization recommendations in this document and to instructions on product labels.

In addition to updated recommendations, new topics addressed in this guideline include

1. inactivation of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, bioterrorist agents, emerging pathogens, and bloodborne pathogens;
2. toxicologic, environmental, and occupational concerns associated with disinfection and sterilization practices;
3. disinfection of patient-care equipment used in ambulatory settings and home care;
4. new sterilization processes, such as hydrogen peroxide gas plasma and liquid peracetic acid; and
5. disinfection of complex medical instruments (e.g., endoscopes).

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National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID)

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