

Staff Huddle: **Environmental Controls-Laundry-Part 1 Handling dirty laundry**

Week #1

Germs:

- are in body fluids, on the skin, and even can be transported in the air.
- are found on dry surfaces. Some of these germs can live for a very long time on the surfaces— days or even weeks.
- spread through direct and indirect touch from dry surfaces. The dry surfaces of bedding, towels, and other linens have fluids and germs from our clients on them.

Following good laundry infection control practices can prevent the spread of germs to other clients and staff.

- Handle soiled laundry in a manner that prevents germs from spreading to the environment and healthcare personnel clothing. --hold/carry away from your body and clothing.
- Put soiled laundry in bags at point of use.
- Do not shake, sort, or prerinse at the point of use.
- Soiled laundry should be contained in bags or containers that clearly indicate that they are soiled. (On the floor or care area).
- Wear PPE (personal protective equipment: gloves, gowns, eye protection, masks) per facility policy.
- Hamper covers are not required in care areas. (Example, hampers in the resident's room)
- Place bagged soiled laundry in a soiled cart in a soiled utility until transported for laundering.
- Perform hand hygiene.



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Week #2

Following good laundry infection control practices can prevent the spread of germs to other clients and staff:

If using a laundry chute (if this does not apply to your facility, skip this week and proceed to the week 3)

- Use in a manner to minimize the possibility of germs entering the air from the air flow as laundry goes into and down the chute.
- Do routine cleaning and inspection of the area. -laundry chute intake and discharge areas, and loading dock area where dirty laundry is transferred will have many germs from the soiled laundry
- Areas should undergo a daily cleaning and disinfection consistent with other areas of the facility.



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Week #3

Soiled laundry rooms/areas:

- should be negative pressure and should be separate from clean areas to reduce the risk of germ spread from leaving the dirty laundry room by the air pathway.
- Negative pressure is maintained by ventilation pulling air upward and out of the room.
- This promotes airflow into the room and helps keep any germs from leaving the room if a door is opened.
- Soiled laundry holding areas also have many germs and should undergo a daily cleaning and disinfection consistent with facility policy.
- Clean dirty clothes hampers or laundry baskets according to facility's guidance.

Use an EPA-registered disinfectant. Observe contact times for the cleaning or disinfection product being used. For review, contact time is the amount of time the disinfectant needs to sit on the surface to effectively kill germs.

Actions taken to reduce germs from getting into the air (like ventilation systems, vacuum filters, cough etiquette etc.) can prevent germs from being breathed in. Germs can also spread through the air and enter the respiratory system causing infection.



References:

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8. Selected EPA-Registered Disinfectants | US EPA; <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/selected-epa-registered-disinfectants>
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