

Disinfectants and Sterilants

SMH Off-Site Clinical Locations

The purpose of this training session is to identify the common chemical agents used to disinfect/sterilize equipment and surfaces. Information will also be provided to list actions you can take to minimize the hazards they present.



Glutaraldehyde

- This chemical has a very low allowable exposure limit. Exposures can occur by inhalation & dermal contact. Special precautions must be taken.
- This chemical is the active ingredient for Cidex
- To ensure personnel are not over-exposed to this agent, contact Environmental Health & Safety's Industrial Hygiene Unit at 585-275-3241 for a workplace assessment

Glutaraldehyde

- Precautions for the safe use include:
 - A face shield & gloves must be worn to mix, process equipment, or transfer the solutions
 - A soak pan is to be kept covered at all times to prevent vapor exposure & evaporation of Cidex
 - Depending upon the quantity used, a special fume hood may be required
 - Consult the cleaning recommendations of the equipment manufacturer and Infection Control for policies/practices for use

Bleach

- Bleach: A disinfectant used in many clinical locations.
- When making a 1:10 dilution:
 - Wear gloves and safety glasses
 - Make solution, place into bottle, label and date the bottle
- When using:
 - Avoid skin contact. Always wear gloves and safety glasses. Never get solution onto face!
- When the expiration date is exceeded, pour solution down the drain (flush with water)

Isopropyl Alcohol

- Isopropyl alcohol (70%) is a common disinfectant (usually purchased in this concentration)
- Exposure to skin can dehydrate the skin. Avoid skin contact.
- Isopropyl alcohol is flammable! Do not use near flames or spark sources.
- Minimize quantity present in any location
- Because it vaporizes readily, many medical uses do not result in the generation of wastes

Virex 256

- This disinfectant is considered equivalent to bleach but is safer on environmental surfaces
- Active ingredients include:
 - Dicetyl dimethyl ammonium chloride
 - Alkl dimethlybenzyl ammonium chloride
- Normal use will NOT expose personnel to excessive vapors. However, prevent exposures by wearing gloves and a face shield.

Actions to take for an exposure

- Take immediate first aid measures
 - Eyes & face
 - Rinse exposed part using eyewash station.
 - Rinse for 15 minutes
 - Skin
 - Rinse exposed part at sink
 - Rinse for 15 minutes
- Report exposure to supervisor
- Seek medical attention

Questions/Concerns?

- If you have any question about the disinfectants or sterilants used in your location, contact your supervisor
- Remember... **Always use the material in a manner stated by the manufacturer!**