

Step by step instructions for disinfecting cuffs

1. Using proper protective gear as needed (dependent on the chemical used...see label), take a cuff cover to be cleaned and place it on a clean/non-contaminated surface that is liquid resistant.
2. Apply the disinfectant according to the instructions on the label which usually are: spray or wipe the entire surface of the cuff, including seams, areas under the edge of the Velcro and the Velcro with disinfectant until visibly wet. Pay special attention to Velcro surfaces, all seams, area where Velcro is sewn on cuff (under the lip) and where the cuff opens to put in bladder. You must get every part of the loops and hooks of the Velcro visibly wet (easier said than done).
3. Allow the cuff to remain visibly wet for a minimum of 10 minutes to insure complete disinfection. Please read the labels and follow the manufacturer's instructions because the "contact times" can vary and 10 minutes is the current longest time period given by the manufacturers of the chemicals listed previously to effectively kill all of the organisms listed on the label. Microorganisms are becoming resistant to chemicals just as they are to antibiotics, for example recent studies of the effectiveness of alcohol hand sanitizers with Norovirus have found the sanitizer may increase risk of transmission of the virus. One wonders if it is because insufficient time or amount of sanitizer was used.
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3168661/>
 - a. In addition remember that if you have to mix or dilute a chemical the concentration declines over time so after reading the instructions on the label, be sure to only use a mixture that is sufficiently fresh enough to actual disinfect.
 - b. Also for some chemicals the temperature affects the effectiveness and "contact time".
 - c. Do not try to disinfect wet cuffs as this dilutes the chemicals and reduces or can completely negate the disinfection.
 - d. If you use anything to apply the disinfectant it should be clean and as free from contamination as possible.
 - e. Do not contaminate the disinfectant; it can be done.
4. Wipe dry with clean dry cloth. After doing a set or batch of cuffs the towel should be washed and dryer dried before reuse.
5. What do you do to clean the bladder? If the bladder is contaminated: Plug the tubing to prevent any water from getting into the bladder or tubing. Wipe clean with a soapy towel and then rinse (keeping water out of the bladder and tubing) and let dry or towel dry with a clean non-contaminated towel. Wipe down or spray bladder when it is thoroughly dry with one of the disinfectants (read their label for how to apply) allow the surfaces to remain visibly wet for 10 minutes and then towel dry with a new clean towel.

For limbs and toes, to prevent contamination:

Place sterile 4x4's over any open wounds and wrap with plastic food wrap gently. Then place the cuff over the plastic wrap. Be careful when putting this on and taking it off to not contaminate your hands. Remember a cuff over an open wound HURTS.

Step by step instructions for cleaning cuffs

Recommended: cuff covers should be washed daily, after use. Minimum: at least once a week you should wash the covers on your vascular cuffs either in a washing machine or in a sink. Knowing that many facilities do not have the time or sufficient cuffs to follow this recommendation, then the bare minimum is to wipe down or spray the cuff with a disinfectant and let it stay visibly wet for 10 minutes to clean the cuff. Then you can dry off the cuff with a clean towel before use.

Daily (or at minimum once a week) washing can be accomplished using a washing machine, as follows:

Cleaning vascular cuffs with a washing machine

1. If cuffs are grossly contaminated with blood or body secretions, keep the cuffs wet or moist to prevent the material from drying which will make removal more difficult.
2. Remove the bladders from the cuffs. To protect yourself you can put on surgical gloves (non-sterile).
3. If the bladder was contaminated, it can be washed off with soapy water and then rinsed. **DO NOT GET WATER INSIDE THE BLADDER OR TUBING.**
4. Add a laundry soap or mild detergent to either warm or cold water and put the cuff covers in. Do not skimp on the amount of water. Higher temperatures may lead to coagulation of proteinaceous material forming a protective layer for microorganisms.
5. Use a gentle cycle. Do not use fabric softener.
6. Remove cuffs from the washing machine and open the end of the cuff where the bladder goes and hang the cuff up to dry.

If there is no washing machine available, the cuffs can be washed in a sink and hung to dry as follows:

Cleaning cuffs by hand washing

Follow steps 1, 2 and 3 above.

4. Add soap or a mild detergent to a sink filled with warm water (easier on your hands than cold water.) Higher temperatures may lead to coagulation of proteinaceous material forming a protective layer for microorganisms.
5. Using a soft tooth brush or hand brush scrub the cuffs especially where there is a biofilm or obvious contamination to remove the matter. All Velcro should be well scrubbed to loosen and remove any material and microorganisms as possible. Rub the cuff material together and agitate the water to remove as much material as possible. You can soak the cuffs for a few minutes to loosen the soiled material.
6. When there are no visible contaminants, remove from the soapy water and rinse thoroughly with copious amounts of water, preferably under a faucet.
7. Roll the cuffs up to drain off as much water as possible (do not twist) and open the end of the cuff where the bladder goes and hang the cuff up to dry.

After machine or hand washing then drying, make sure both the outside and inside are dry including the Velcro before reinserting the bladders. If needed, disinfect the cuff covers before or after inserting the bladders. See disinfection instructions on the other side of this sheet.