

## FAQ

### Module 3 Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection

**Facilitator notes:** Each Project Firstline CNA module is designed to provide 30 minutes of training content with optional post-training discussion using the *FAQ* files. Use any or all *FAQ* below to initiate further discussion among CNA after trainings, during huddles or team meetings, etc.

#### The Role of CNAs in Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection

- 1. Sometimes EVS asks us to remove debris or personal items. Is this part of the scope of practice for CNA? If yes, how can we coordinate with EVS to make sure this happens in a timely manner?**

Yes, CNA can assist in the cleaning process by getting the room ready (e.g., removing personal items) for cleaning and disinfection. Get the resident involved in the process; it might help to explain to the resident why we need to move those items to clean – to help keep them safe from germs.

- 2. I didn't know CNAs have a responsibility to help clean. How do I know what I am supposed to clean?**

Cleaning the whole room is the responsibility of EVS staff, but CNAs can help keep the germ load down by cleaning high-touch surfaces in the resident's room and nurses' stations at least one a day. Check with your facility policy to understand CNA cleaning responsibilities.

- 3. What should I do if I see an EVS worker not cleaning properly?**

It might be that they are unable to fully clean an area due to medical equipment blocking the way. If this is the case you can help them in that moment. If you do not feel comfortable addressing this on your own, speak with your infection preventionist, director of nursing (DON), or supervisor to share your concerns.

- 4. How often should I clean high-touch surfaces?**

Clean high-touch surfaces at least daily. If you are in an outbreak situation, this should be done more frequently throughout the day. The goal is to keep the germ load and bioburden down.

- 5. What if we run out of cleaning supplies?**

If you have concerns in your facility supply speak with your infection preventionist or director of nursing (DON).

- 6. If a disinfectant has two contact/wet times on the label, which one should I follow?**

Always follow the longer contact/wet time to ensure germs are being killed properly. Be aware that contact/wet time is specific to each type of disinfectant. If you have any questions about a disinfectant's contact/wet time, you can refer to

the product label, safety data sheet (SDS), or your facility's infection preventionist or EVS manager.

## **Changing Linens and Bedmaking**

### **7. How should we clean a resident's personal quilt or blanket?**

The resident's personal quilt or blanket can be laundered at the facility, sent home with the resident's family, or sent out to a laundry service. Ensure the facility labels the resident's belongings before laundering. Always follow your facility policy to clean residents' personal quilts and blankets.

### **8. What do I do with soiled linen if the linen cart is overflowing?**

CNAs should be aware of who is responsible for emptying the linen cart and who to contact if they need assistance. CNAs can also note if this is not being done in a timely manner. If you cannot find anyone to assist in that moment, you can place the soiled linen in a bag and immediately take it to the soiled linen closet or laundry chute. This will prevent the spread of germs onto the floor or passing through the facility.

### **9. Is it common practice to place the dirty linens on the floor while changing bed linens?**

No, do not place dirty linens on the floor; this can transfer germs onto the floor which can be tracked from room to room. Instead, place soiled linen in the soiled linen cart as they are removed from the bed.

### **10. If a resident is sensitive to the detergent used for their clothes or sheets, are they able to use their own detergent?**

Depending on the facility policy and laundry methods used, a preferred hypoallergenic cleaning solution can be used. Some facilities will also allow their clothing to be washed at home by family or done through a personally arranged laundry service.

### **11. If a resident has blood on their linens, should those linens get washed separately?**

No, we do not separate out linens that are bloody. All linen is considered dirty and must be laundered and dried at a certain temperature and with specific detergents to kill germs of concern.

## **References**

- [6 Steps for Safe & Effective Disinfectant Use | Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/documents/disinfectants-onepager.pdf) (PDF) (www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/documents/disinfectants-onepager.pdf)
- [About Project Firstline | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/projectfirstline/about.html) (www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/projectfirstline/about.html)
- [Background G. Laundry and Bedding: Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health-Care Facilities \(2003\) | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/environmental/background/laundry.html) (www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/environmental/background/laundry.html)

- [Cleaning: Guideline for Disinfection and Sterilization in Healthcare Facilities \(2008\) | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](http://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/disinfection/cleaning.html)  
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- [EVS and the Battle Against Infection: a Graphic Novel | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](http://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/training/evs-battle-infection.html)  
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- [Inside Infection Control: Why Do Cleaning and Disinfection Matter in Healthcare? | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](http://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/projectfirstline/videos/EP20-CandD-LowRes.mp4)  
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- [Recommendations for Disinfection and Sterilization in Healthcare Facilities | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](http://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/disinfection/recommendations.html)  
(www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/disinfection/recommendations.html)
- [Reduce Risk from Surfaces | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](http://www.cdc.gov/hai/prevent/environment/surfaces.html)  
(www.cdc.gov/hai/prevent/environment/surfaces.html)