
OPERATING ROOM POLICY AND PROCEDURE

NO: OR-IC 1.03

APPROVAL DATE: 07/01/19

EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/01/19

SUBJECT: Surgical Hand and Antisepsis/Hand Scrub

OBJECTIVE

To reduce the number of bacteria present on the skin of those who are scrubbed for a surgical procedure, thus reducing the possibility of transmission of bacteria if a defect occurs in the sterile gown or gloves.

POLICY

All operating room personnel will perform a surgical hand scrub prior to gowning and gloving using either the anatomic timed method or the alcohol-based hand rub. Sterile members of the surgical team scrub preoperatively adhering to the principles of surgical asepsis.

PROCEDURE

I. Surgical Hand Scrub Preparation:

1. Remove jewelry as it may harbor organisms, including watches, bracelets and rings.
2. Wear appropriate surgical attire, refer to OR policy OR-IC 3.03.
3. Inspect hands and arms for cuts and abrasions. Open lesions increase the risk of infection to both patient and the surgical team member. Avoid scrubbing if you have open lesions. Report problems to the head nurse.
4. Fingernails should be short, clean, and healthy. Artificial nails or nail extenders are not permitted for any health care personnel having direct contact with patients as they harbor microorganisms and hinder effective hand washing. Refer to the hospital policy IC 1.03.
5. If hands are visibly soiled, wash hands thoroughly with soap and water prior to performing either method of the surgical hand scrub.
6. Scrub personnel must clean nails using a nail cleaner for their first scrub of the day for either the anatomic time scrub or the alcohol-based rub method.

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II. Scrubbing Procedure:

1. Before the surgical hand scrub, the scrub person opens the gown package containing the sterile gown, towel and gloves and places them on a table in the OR. The main instrument table should not be used.
2. To perform the surgical hand scrub using the anatomic time scrub method, the scrub person:
 - a. Opens the sterile scrub brush package and positions it for easy access.
 - b. Turns on the water. Water is controlled with the knee control panel or sensor on the sink. Avoid splashing surgical attire as water on the nonsterile scrub attire may soak through and contaminate the sterile gown.
 - c. Wets hands and forearms. Removes nail cleaner from the package, cleans under nails of both hands using the nail cleaner while holding hands under running water, and then discards the nail cleaner.
 - d. Proceeds to perform the anatomic time scrub by considering each anatomic area (fingers, arms, hands) as having four sides.
 - e. Scrubs thoroughly for 3 minutes.
 - f. Avoids contact with faucets or side of sink. If contact is made, re-scrub the area that came in contact with the object.
 - g. The scrub person holds the brush perpendicular to the fingertips and scrubs the nails, then scrubs the fingers using a back and forth motion on all four sides of each finger, including interdigital spaces.
 - h. Scrubs the palm and the back of the same hand to the wrist using a circular motion.
 - i. Maintains lather and ensures that all skin surfaces are sufficiently exposed to the friction of scrubbing and the antimicrobial agent.
 - j. Moves to arm scrub by mentally dividing the arms into thirds, each third having four planes. The first third is the wrist, the second third is the middle area, and the last third is the proximal third, which is two inches above the elbow. Scrubbing in a circular motion by starting from the wrist to two inches pass the elbow is also an acceptable technique.
 - k. Transfers the scrub brush to the other hand and repeats all the steps for scrubbing from the fingertips to two inches above the elbow.
 - l. Rinses hands and arms thoroughly in one direction from fingertips to elbows.
 - m. Repeats scrub for 3 more minutes.
 - n. Discards the brush into the waste container, dropping it in, keeping hands up and away from your body.
 - o. Rinses hands and arms under running water, starting at the fingertips and working towards the elbow, keeping hand upright and elbows in a downwards position.

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3. Drying Hands and Arms

The scrub person must thoroughly dry hands and arms after the anatomic time scrub method before donning the gown to prevent organisms on the wet skin from soaking through and contaminating the sterile gown. This soaking through, known as strikethrough allows microorganisms from the wet skin or scrub attire to contaminate the sterile gown.

The scrub person:

- a. Picks up the sterile towel with one hand by the corner, being careful not to drip water on the sterile area.
- b. Grasps the opposing corner of the towel with the other hand and opens the towel to full length. The scrub person uses one end of the towel to dry one arm and hand and uses a circumferential motion to rub from hand to upper arm.
- c. Bends slightly forward to avoid letting towel touch the attire.
- d. Holds the dry end of the towel in the opposite hand to dry the second arm and uses a circumferential motion to dry the hand and all areas of the arm to the elbows.
- e. Discards the towel without letting it touch the scrub attire.

4. To perform surgical hand scrub using an alcohol-based surgical hand rub product (Avagard).

- a. If using Avagard as the first scrub of the day, use the standing nail pick to clean under nails with soap and water. Dry hands thoroughly.
- b. Dispense the manufacturer recommended amount of the surgical hand rub product to one hand.
- c. Following manufacturer's recommendation, dip the fingertips of one hand in the solution. Proceed to apply the product to each fingers and interdigital space in a rubbing motion.
- d. Move toward the palm and the back of one hand then move up the wrist and up to two inches pass the elbow. Obtain more product as necessary.
- e. Repeat the process on the other hand, starting with the fingertips to two inches pass the elbow.
- f. Re-apply the product to both hands as the final step without going pass the wrists.
- g. Rub thoroughly until dry.

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7/1/19
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References

- 1) AORN Facility Reference Center. Guidelines for Perioperative Practice. Hand Hygiene. 2019.
- 2) 3M. Avagard IFU.
- 3) Operating Room Policy and Procedure. Surgical Traffic Flow and Surgical Attire Infection Control Practices. OR-IC 3.03.
- 4) University of Illinois Hospital and Clinics. Management Policy and Procedure. Hand and Nail Hygiene. IC-1.03.

Rescission Date

June 2016
December 2013
December 2010
February 2007
October 2004
November 2001
December 1998

Policy Owner - Robin Garrett, Senior Director, Perioperative Services.