

Appendix 1B: Quick guide - Environmental cleaning and disinfection for outbreaks of gastroenteritis in care facilities, children's services centres or camps

Guidelines for the investigation of gastroenteritis

NOTE: A copy of Appendix 1A – Guidance for the dilution of chlorine-based solutions required for disinfection, should be provided with this document. It will assist you with dilutions.

This document has been prepared as a quick reference guide for staff involved in environmental cleaning during an outbreak of gastroenteritis in a care facility, children's services centre or camp facility. It is a guide to the steps that need to be followed to ensure that the cleaning measures implemented during an outbreak are effective. Your council Environmental Health Officer (EHO) will be supervising the following to ensure it is completed in accordance with the guidelines.

For more detailed information regarding environmental cleaning and disinfection, please refer to the relevant industry guide (A guide for the management and control of gastroenteritis outbreaks in the following settings: care facilities, children's services centres or camp facilities).

This guide refers to a 3-step cleaning and disinfecting process, where cleaning and disinfecting are done as separate processes. A kitchen or food handling surface needs to be thoroughly cleaned with detergent before it is disinfected when using this method¹.

Kitchen and food handling areas

Clean and disinfect all work surfaces, benches, shelving, doors, door handles, storage areas, sinks, floors, etc., or any other areas that are possibly contaminated - wash with hot water and detergent and apply 1000ppm of available chlorine, leave for 10 minutes, rinse then dry

Clean and disinfect all utensils, equipment, crockery and cutlery in one of the following ways:

1. Wash with hot water and detergent, then soak items in hot water at a minimum of 77°C for at least 30 seconds, OR
2. Place items in a commercial dishwasher where the water temperature in the rinse cycle is greater than 80°C, OR
3. Place items in a domestic dishwasher using the hottest and longest cycle available (e.g. heavy duty cycle, 65°C or above), OR
4. Wash with hot water and detergent, soak items in 100ppm of available chlorine for at least 3 minutes at a minimum water temperature of 50°C, OR
5. For items or equipment that CANNOT be completely soaked in water, wash with hot water and detergent then apply 200ppm of available chlorine on all surfaces for 10 minutes, then rinse and dry.

It is important that all food processing equipment (blenders, mixers, stab mixers, etc.) be dismantled enough to be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Equipment parts need to be washed and scrubbed clean before a chlorine-based solution can be applied or before the parts are placed into a dishwasher.

ALL OTHER AREAS

Wash areas thoroughly with detergent and hot water. Rinse, then apply 1000ppm of available chlorine, leave for 10 minutes, rinse, then dry

Toilets and bathrooms – toilet bowls, hand wash basins, tap handles, toilet flush buttons/handles, doors and door handles, floors and any other areas that may have been contaminated

Communal areas – staff rooms, dining rooms, lounge rooms, banisters, hand rails, lockers, telephones, cupboard handles, all common areas and frequently touched surfaces

Cleaning of vomit or faeces – remove all people from immediate area. Cleaners to use appropriate PPE, mask, gloves, apron. Clean area using detergent and hot water, then apply 1000ppm of available chlorine, leave for 10 minutes, rinse then dry. Use disposable mops and cloths.
If area is carpeted steam clean area after washing with detergent and hot water.

Carpets, mattresses and soft furnishings contaminated by vomit or faeces – clean all soiled surfaces with detergent and hot water then steam clean using a steam cleaner that releases steam under pressure (above 100°C). Discard if not able to be effectively cleaned.

Do NOT vacuum carpets or polish floors during a gastro outbreak as it has the potential to recirculate norovirus.

Soiled clothing and linen (sheets, towels, blankets etc) – wash in washing machine on the hottest cycle then dry in a dryer on the hottest cycle (AS/NZS 4146(2000) – guidelines for correct laundry practice)

All common and residential areas should be cleaned at least twice a day until the outbreak has been declared over.

A final clean of all areas needs to be completed at the end of every outbreak.

¹ A 2-in-1 combined cleaning and disinfecting product may be used, allowing for a 1-step cleaning and disinfection process as opposed to the 3-step (wash, sanitise, then rinse/dry). There are a number of 2-in-1 detergent and disinfectant products available that are simple and effective to use. Ensure the manufacturers' instructions are followed for correct dilution and use.