Purposes

The purpose of this guideline is to ensure the selection, use and maintenance of patient care tubs meets Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) guidelines and standards in all Alberta Health Services (AHS) facilities. This document addresses tubs used for bathing (e.g. bath tubs, sitz baths). This document does not address hydrotherapy equipment or cleaning / disinfection of jetted tubs.

Best Practice Guidelines

Literature has shown that patient tubs pose a risk of infection to clients in both acute care settings and facility living environments if not properly cleaned, disinfected and maintained. Hollyoak, Boyd, and Freeman (1995) inspected seventeen whirlpool baths used in Durham nursing homes and found that water samples from all baths showed heavy growth of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. Berrouane et al (2000) investigated a prolonged outbreak of hospital acquired infections with the same organism and discovered that a whirlpool bathtub was the source.

Product Evaluation

IPC recommendations for selection of tubs for healthcare settings:

1. New tubs purchased for use in healthcare facilities must be non-jetted. This includes air and water jets. Do not purchase tubs with jets or whirlpools.
2. The surface of the tubs should be constructed of a smooth, non porous material that will facilitate frequent, vigorous cleaning and disinfection. Non-slip surfaces must allow for effective cleaning and disinfection.
3. Detailed cleaning, disinfection procedures and preventative maintenance information must be provided in writing by the manufacturer. Manufacturer's recommended disinfection products must have a DIN from Health Canada and be approved for use in AHS.

Cleaning, Low level Disinfection and Maintenance of Patient Care Tubs

1. There must be a written procedure for daily cleaning and low level disinfection of tubs that follows the manufacturer’s instructions. Responsibility for daily cleaning and disinfection must be identified in the procedure. Daily cleaning of tubs must be documented. Instructions should be posted and/or readily available to staff.
2. There must be a written procedure for cleaning and low level disinfection of tubs and lifting devices between patients that follows the manufacturer’s instructions. Responsibility for cleaning and disinfection between patients must be identified in the procedure. The procedure should be posted and the information readily available to staff.
3. There must be a written procedure for routine preventative maintenance of tubs that follows the manufacturer’s instructions. Responsible person(s) / departments for preventative maintenance must be identified in the procedure. Maintenance of tubs must be documented, the procedure should be followed and the information readily available for maintenance staff.
References


