

Office of Origin: Department of Hospital Epidemiology and Infection Prevention (HEIP)

I. PURPOSE

- A. To ensure that patients and others (siblings/visitors) are provided and have access to clean toys.
- B. To reduce communicable disease transmission risks related to toys, among patients seen in inpatient and ambulatory locations.
- C. To ensure proper procedures for cleaning and disinfecting toys and play equipment.
- D. To outline infection prevention standards and practices followed by Child Life staff, volunteers, nursing staff, clinic staff, Hospitality, and other designated persons.

II. REFERENCES

- A. Bryant, K. A., & Guzman-Cottril, J. A. (2019). Handbook of Pediatric Infection Prevention and Control. New York: Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society.
- B. Schulster LM, Chinn RYW, Arduino MJ, Carpenter J, Donlan R, Ashford D, Besser R, Fields B, McNeil MM, Whitney C, Wong S, Juranek D, Cleveland J. Guidelines for environmental infection control in health-care facilities. Recommendations from CDC and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC). Chicago IL; American Society for Healthcare Engineering/American Hospital Association; 2004.
- C. Siegel JD, Rhinehart E, Jackson M, Chiarello L, and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee, 2007 Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings.
- D. Tomblyn, M et al. (2009). Guidelines for Preventing Infectious Complications among Hematopoietic Cell Transplantation Recipients: A Global Perspective. *American Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation*, 1143-1238.
- E. [HEIP Policy 1.1 Standard Precautions and Transmission-Based Isolation](#)
- F. [HEIP Policy 5.5 Agents Available for Disinfection and Antisepsis](#)
- G. [UCSF Health Neonatal Pediatric Nursing Procedure, Bone Marrow Transplant](#)

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Hospital-approved disinfectant:** EPA-registered disinfectants approved by the institution's Infection Prevention Committee for routine cleaning and disinfection. These disinfectants are to be used according to the manufacturer's recommendations including amount, dilution, and appropriate contact time to remove pathogens effectively.
- B. **Contact time:** Amount of time a disinfectant needs to sit on a surface, without being wiped away or disturbed, to effectively kill germs
- C. **Stationary toys:** Toys affixed to tables, walls, ceilings, floors, casework, or that are not easily moveable by the patient.

- D. **Moveable toys:** Individual, transportable toys including but not limited to books, dolls, blocks, and games.
- E. **Therapeutic items:** Toys and items used for distraction and/or instruction (e.g., coping kits, central venous catheter education dolls, radiology play equipment).
- F. **School materials:** Textbooks from the UCSF Child Life Marie Wattis Schoolroom and/or the patient's own school, and accompanying school items including pencils, calculators, and rulers.
- G. **Special books:** Rare or out of print books that cannot be gifted to the patient.

IV. POLICY

A. Toy Selection and Use

- 1. Toys provided for patient use are to be made of materials that can be easily cleaned (e.g., plastic, vinyl, metals, and finished woods with a polymer, water-proof coating).
- 2. Water-retaining toys are prohibited. (exception: closed water systems, e.g., liquid filled wands)
- 3. The following types of toys are to be avoided for communal rotation. Toys in this category are to be single patient use and given to the patient to take home:
 - a. Soft, stuffed toys
 - b. Toys that are difficult to clean and dry
- 4. Card and board games must be laminated, so they can be easily wiped down and disinfected.
- 5. Only hard surface toys and single-patient toys into Enteric Contact isolation rooms.
- 6. Infants, toddlers, and children that put toys in their mouths cannot share toys.
- 7. Toys must not be exchanged between children on inpatient units. Toys are to be returned to the playroom or designated dirty toy storage containers on the pediatric units after use.

B. Toy Cleaning Responsibility

- 1. Toy cleaning is the responsibility of all departments housing their own toys.
- 2. Child life staff, volunteers and interns shall be responsible for cleaning and monitoring toys and materials that are used in Child Life Services programming spaces or distributed to the units by Child Life Services. All toys returning from patient rooms will be cleaned prior to being placed back into rotation.

C. General Toy Cleaning and Care by Type

1. Clean stationary toys with hospital approved disinfectant at least once per day when in use and when visibly soiled.
 2. Handle moveable toys in one of four ways after each use and when visibly soiled:
 - a. Clean with hospital-approved disinfectant.
 - b. Wash in automated dishwasher.
 - c. Give to the patient to take home.
 - d. Discard.
 3. Soft toys (e.g., fabric, stuffed, including mobiles with stuffed toys) are single-patient use only. *Communal soft toys are not permitted.*
 - a. *Exception:* Soft medical play/instructional dolls such as those used to demonstrate medical procedures (e.g., insertion of catheters) to children for educational purposes must be disassembled and cleaned after each use. See recommendation for therapeutic items below.
 4. Therapeutic items must be cleaned after each use.
 5. Books are not to be shared or placed into communal rotation on the units. *Books in Child Life spaces must be disinfected after each use and are not to leave the Child Life space.*
 - a. Exception: Special books that cannot be gifted to the patient must be treated in the following way on the unit for read aloud activities:
 - i. Bring book into the patient's room inside of a plastic container.
 - ii. Remove the book from the container and read aloud to the patient. Do not allow the patient to touch the book and do not set the book down in the patient's environment
 - iii. Return the book to the plastic container.
 - iv. Exit room and clean the book and container with hospital approved disinfectant.
 6. School materials
 - a. Any school items or supplies (e.g., pencils, calculators, rulers, plastic shapes, etc.) provided by UCSF or the patient's own school must be new or cleaned with hospital-approved disinfectant prior to being taken into the patient's room (*exception: BMT patients—see below*)
 7. Large toys and play equipment must be cleaned with a hospital-approved disinfectant before and after each use.
- D. Additional Considerations for Bone Marrow Transplant (BMT) Patients
1. All toys given to Bone Marrow Transplant (BMT) patients must be new and cleaned with hospital-approved disinfectant prior to being brought into the patient's room.
 2. Toys brought from home must be treated appropriately per unit policy prior to being brought into the room and cleaned after each use with hospital-approved disinfectant.
- E. Additional Considerations for Patients on Transmission Based Precautions

1. Toys used in Droplet, Contact, Airborne, or Novel Respiratory isolation rooms may remain with the patient throughout hospitalization or visit, then handled as in section C above.
2. Toys from Enteric Contact isolation rooms must remain with the patient throughout hospitalization or visit, but must be handled in one of three ways upon discharge:
 - a. Discarded.
 - b. Sent home with patient.
 - c. Sent back to Child Life Services for cleaning.
 - i. Placed in bin located in Soiled Utility for pick up by Child Life Services.
 - ii. Cleaned in dishwasher by Child Life Services.

V. PROCEDURES

A. Cleaning with Hospital-approved Disinfectant

1. Wipe toys with hospital-approved disinfectant. Use friction and allow the surface to remain undisturbed for the appropriate contact time.
2. Before being used by another patient, toys with a high likelihood of being mouthed are to be rinsed, wiped down with water, or placed in the dishwasher after disinfection.

B. Cleaning with Automated Dishwasher

1. Load toys into the dishwasher. *Toys must be washed in a dedicated dishwasher that is not used to clean dishes, utensils, or other feeding items. Residential grade dishwashers are acceptable.*
2. Air dry items in an area that is >3 feet away from the sink “splash zone”.

VI. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Hospital Epidemiology and Infection Prevention (HEIP)

VII. HISTORY OF POLICY

- A. Revised 4/2001, 4/2004, 11/2007, 1/2013, 2/2013, 7/2016, 1/2020, 10/2024, 6/2025

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