
APIC Guideline for Hand Washing and Hand Antisepsis in Health-Care Settings*

Elaine L. Larson and 1992, 1993, and 1994 APIC Guidelines Committee
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc.

The Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc. (APIC) Board of Directors and Guidelines Committee are pleased to present the "APIC" Guideline for Hand Washing and Hand Antisepsis in Health Care Settings."

Elaine Larson, RN, PhD, FAAN, CIC, was selected to revise the previously published "APIC Guideline for Use of Topical Antimicrobial Agents" because of her recognized expertise in infection control and extensive research in hand washing and hand disinfection. Initial drafts received review by the APIC Guidelines Committee, key individuals, and professional organizations before publication of the Draft in the October 1994 issue of the *Journal*, soliciting further comments. All written comments were reviewed by the APIC Guidelines Committee and revisions were made. The Guideline was finalized by the Committee in February 1995 and approved by the APIC Board of Directors in March 1995.

The APIC Board of Directors and the APIC Guidelines Committee express our sincere gratitude to the author and to all who provided assistance in the guideline development and review process.

The success of United States efforts in infection control has been due in large part to attention paid to the individual person as a primary source of the spread and thus the prevention of nosocomial infections. It is known, for example, that hand washing causes a significant reduction in the carriage of potential pathogens on the hands.^{1,2} It is also known that hand washing can result in reductions in patient morbidity and mortality from nosocomial infection.^{3,4} Although a definitive, double-blind, clinical trial of the effects of hand washing with an antiseptic product on nosocomial infection rates may be infeasible, it

appears that, at least in certain high-risk situations, such antimicrobial products are beneficial.^{3,4} Two major dilemmas facing ICs in health care settings today, however, are when to use antiseptic agents and which agents to use.

In addition to the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc. (APIC),¹¹ several agencies and organizations have published guidelines, regulations, and standards regarding the topical use of antimicrobials for skin hygiene.^{2,5-14} This particular guideline will supplement those published by the Association of Operating Room Nurses (AORN),¹² the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC),² and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)^{13,14} by describing specific characteristics of antimicrobial products available for topical use, summarizing the literature regarding their efficacy, and providing recommendations for their use by surgical personnel for hand scrubbing and by health care personnel for hand washing and hand antisepsis.⁵

This guideline therefore provides information on skin flora of hands, characteristics of selected antimicrobial agents used on hands, hand washing and surgical scrub techniques, and related aspects of hand care and protection. In addition, recommendations are made regarding (1) health care personnel handwashing, (2) personnel hand preparation for operative procedures, and (3) other aspects of hand care and protection.

CHANGES SINCE 1988

This guideline focuses on hand washing, surgical personnel hand scrub, and related topics. Changes in this guideline from the 1988 publication¹¹ include a review of recent literature addressing handwashing and surgical hand scrub products and the addition of sections on use of gloves and lotions; wearing of artificial nails, nail polish, and hand jewelry; and the

From the School of Nursing, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

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Apic Infection Control Guidelines

J Rink



Apic Infection Control Guidelines:

Enjoying the Song of Expression: An Mental Symphony within **Apic Infection Control Guidelines**

In a global used by screens and the ceaseless chatter of fast transmission, the melodic beauty and psychological symphony produced by the written term often diminish in to the backdrop, eclipsed by the constant noise and disruptions that permeate our lives. However, nestled within the pages of **Apic Infection Control Guidelines** a marvelous literary prize brimming with raw feelings, lies an immersive symphony waiting to be embraced. Constructed by a masterful musician of language, this interesting masterpiece conducts viewers on a mental trip, well unraveling the hidden melodies and profound affect resonating within each carefully crafted phrase. Within the depths of the touching analysis, we can discover the book is key harmonies, analyze their enthralling writing style, and submit ourselves to the profound resonance that echoes in the depths of readers souls.

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