INFECTION CONTROL POLICIES

Surface Disinfection

Surface disinfection is a two-step process. The general process is to first clean to remove gross contamination, then disinfect to kill the germs. Antibacterial spray or disinfectant wipes are available in each therapy and evaluation room for disinfecting. Paper towels are available to wipe away gross contamination. This protocol will be used on:

1. Table tops and chairs between clients, as needed.
2. The reception counter in the morning, at noon, and at closing.
3. Telephones in the Clinic Office and the Professional Preparation Room.
4. Any equipment routinely handled and manipulated by clients.
5. Therapy materials routinely handled by clients or manipulated by multiply clients will be laminated for easy cleaning.
6. Head phones used with tape recorders, delayed auditory feedback machines, and portable audiometers will be disinfected after usage.

Orofacial Examination

Gauze pads and tongue depressors are stored in the Clinic Office and in the Voice Lab. Examining gloves must be worn for intraoral palpation, and should be worn during the entire examination. These items are usually disposed of in a regular waste container after use.

Handling Hearing Aids and Earmolds

Hearing aids and earmolds are assumed to be contaminated and therefore should always be handled with gloved hands or with a disinfectant wipe. The following steps will be followed when receiving these items:

1. Receive the instrument in a disinfectant wipe or gloved hand.
2. Use a disinfectant towelette to wipe the instrument over all surfaces.
3. A hearing aid stethoscope may be used on an instrument that has been disinfected properly. Disinfect the stethoscope prior to attaching it to another instrument. The person using the stethoscope should disinfect it after use.

Audiologic Equipment

Earphones and bone oscillators are disinfected at the end of each day or as needed between clients by the clinician. Materials are maintained in the audiologic suite for this purpose. Specula, curettes, probe tips, and any other equipment that are used with
Clients are either thrown away or sterilized following a chemical sterilization procedure as outlined in the Standard Precautions for Audiology.

**Visi-Pitch, Nasometer, Videostroboscopy, and Laryngograph**

Supplies are maintained with this equipment to assure sanitary condition. Plastic microphone covers are used with the Visi-Pitch. The Nasometer faceplate and Laryngograph electrodes are disinfected after each use by the clinician. Procedures that require sterilization of instruments are limited to invasive procedures that require laryngeal mirrors, videostroboscopy, etc. Cold sterilization with a sterilization fluid will be practiced. The following steps will be completed:

1. The solution will be used in a container approved for use with the sterilization fluid. Gloves and goggles will be worn when handling the solution.
2. Instruments will be cleaned with a disinfectant towelette, followed by submersion in the sterilization fluid, following the manufacturer’s recommendations (for the stroboscope a 45 minute soak is required).
3. Instruments must be thoroughly rinsed with water then rinsed with an alcohol wipe to facilitate drying.
4. The solution will be changed every 21 days or sooner if the solution becomes visibly soiled or viscous.
5. A dated label will be attached to the container with the date that the solution was prepared and the 21 day expiration date.
6. The solution will be properly disposed of as directed on the label.

**Toys**

1. Nonporous, easily cleaned toys will be provided.
2. The clinician in charge of the therapy session should wash any toy coming in contact with bodily fluids in a 1:10 bleach solution. The toys are then air-dried and put away. Gloves, goggles, and a protective gown will be worn when handling the bleach and the bleach solution. The bleach solution is flushed down the sink drain after using. All other toys may be cleaned with a disinfectant wipe.
3. Gloves will be worn when routinely cleaning toys and when handling toys known to have been exposed to bodily substances. The gloves are to be thrown in waste container.
4. Laminated therapy materials will be disinfected by the person using the materials.
5. Handwashing will be completed after cleaning and disinfecting toys. (See Handwashing Section for specific procedures.)