

# MIDWIFERY EQUIPMENT **DISINFECTING TIPS**

The table below describes the minimum cleaning and disinfection or sterilization and frequency of cleaning to effectively clean reusable medical devices. Items need to be cleaned before initial use and as soon as possible after use according to the manufacturer's instructions. Single-use devices are discarded following each use. "If there is a discrepancy between the reprocessing level recommended by the manufacturer and the intended use of the instrument by [Spaulding's criteria](#), the higher level of disinfection/sterilization must be used." (1)

*Although the risk of infection transmission via non-critical items is rare, contaminated hands of health care workers touching non-critical items can contribute to secondary transmission of pathogens.*

ITEM	MIN. DISINFECTION LEVEL	MIN. FREQUENCY	NOTES
<b>GENERAL EQUIPMENT</b>			
Fetoscope	Low Level	Between different clients	Ideally use own stethoscope; if shared, disinfect ear pieces.
Stethoscope	Low Level	Between different clients	Ideally use own stethoscope; if shared, disinfect ear pieces.
Doppler	Low Level	Between different clients	Remove ultrasound gel before disinfecting.
Ultrasound gel bottle	Low Level	Between different clients	Label with date opened and discard after one month, since gel has no bacteriostatic abilities. Wipe exterior and ensure gel is stored closed. Never refill bottles.
Pinard horn	Low Level	Between different clients	Wood is porous and cannot be effectively disinfected.
Sphygmomanometer and cuff	Low Level	Between different clients	Refer to manufacturer's instructions for product compatibility.
Thermometer (inc. for birth pool use)	Low Level	Every use	Use probe covers and disinfect.
Ophthalmoscope	Low Level	Between different clients	
Measuring tape (non-retractable)	Low Level	Between different clients	Retractable measuring tape cannot be cleaned. Use non-retractable or paper tapes.
Speculum	Sterilization or Single-use	Every use	
Breast pump (hospital grade)	Low Level	Between different clients	Medela recommends Cavicide disinfectant if pump is intended for shared use.
Breast pump accessories	Single client use	N/A	Single-use; should not be shared between clients.
Electronic devices (e.g. cell phones, pagers, tablets, laptops)	Low Level	Before and after use, if touched	Choose items compatible with cleaning and disinfecting solutions or use barriers (e.g. covers, keyboard skins) to prevent damage (2). Always remove gloves and clean hands prior to touching electronic devices and clean hands after use.
Tourniquet	Single-use or Low Level	Between different clients	Preferably discard after each client use. Discard when soiled or cracked (1).
Vacutainer holder	Low Level	Single-use preferred; every use if reused	Preferably discard after each client use. Discard when soiled or cracked (1).
Personal items (e.g. water, pen, watch)	Low Level	Between different clients	Discard when soiled (1).
<b>BIRTH EQUIPMENT</b>			
Umbilical cord scissors	Sterilize	Every use	
Episiotomy scissors	Sterilize	Every use	
Hemostats	Sterilize	Every use	
Mosquito forceps	Sterilize	Every use	
Ring forceps.	Sterilize	Every use	

ITEM	MIN. DISINFECTION LEVEL	MIN. FREQUENCY	NOTES
<b>BIRTH EQUIPMENT, cont.</b>			
Suturing instruments	Sterilize	Every use	
Flashlight	Low Level	Between different clients	
Timing device	Low Level	Between different clients	
Sharps container	Low Level	Between different clients	Wipe exterior only with lid closed.
Birth and prenatal/postpartum bags and containers within bags	Low Level	Between different clients	Material should be non-porous and wipeable to enable cleaning.
Infant scale	Low Level	Between different clients	
Sling for infant scale (fabric)	Laundry	Between different clients	Consider leaving sling at client's home until all postpartum home visits are completed, then refer to <a href="#">laundry guidelines</a> .
Birth stool	Low Level	Between different clients	Prevent exposure to mucous membranes and bodily fluids by covering stool with disposable, absorbable coverings. Avoid porous materials (e.g. wood) to ensure effective disinfection.
Birth pool with disposable liner	Low Level	Before use & between clients	Refer to <a href="#">Guidelines for Water Immersion and Water Birth</a> for cleaning instructions.
Birth pool accessories	Single-use	N/A	Birth pool accessories are for single client use and should not be shared.
<b>NEONATAL RESUSCITATION EQUIPMENT</b>			
Heat source for baby (i.e. heating pad)	Low Level	Between different clients	Use disposable pad and clients' blankets, not the cloth cover supplied with heating pad.
Oxygen tank and regulator	Low Level	Between different clients	
Portable suction equipment	Low Level	Between different clients	Suction tubing is single-use.
Portable pulse oximeter	Low Level	Between different clients	Refer to <a href="#">Pulse Oximeter Maintenance and Cleaning Instructions</a> .
Pulse oximeter accessories – sensors, cables	Single-use	N/A	
Laerdal Silicone Resuscitator (LSR)	Sterilize all parts except oxygen reservoir	Between different clients	Consider single-use self-inflating bags. Reusable oxygen reservoir cannot be autoclaved. Disassemble reusable bags into individual parts prior to cleaning. Refer to Laerdal's <a href="#">cleaning and disinfection instructions</a> .
Laryngoscope handle	Sterilize	Between different clients	Remove battery and light bulb and follow manufacturer's instructions prior to autoclaving.
Laryngoscope blade	Sterilize	Between different clients	
<b>CLINIC EQUIPMENT</b>			
Digital infant scale	Low Level	Between different clients	Consider that using a blue pad does not eliminate need for disinfection.
Adult scale	Low Level	Daily and when soiled	
Exam bed	Low Level	Between different clients	To disinfect, use non-porous, wipeable, seamless beds. Cracks may harbour microorganisms.
Pillow	Low Level	Between different clients	To disinfect, use non-porous, wipeable, seamless pillows (without fabric pillow covers).
NST monitor and probes	Low Level	Between different clients	
NST monitor belts	Single-use or laundry	Between different clients	Consider single use belts (e.g. disposable elastic net bandage). If using reusable belts, refer to <a href="#">laundry guidelines</a> .

## REFERENCES

- Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario), Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee (PIDAC). Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infection in All Health care Settings. 2 ed. [Internet] Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario. May 2012. [cited 2018 Mar 21] Available from: [https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Best\\_Practices\\_Environmental\\_Cleaning\\_2012.pdf](https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Best_Practices_Environmental_Cleaning_2012.pdf)
- Standards and Guidelines Committee, Infection Prevention and Control Canada. IPAC Canada Practice Recommendations: Infection Prevention and Control Related to Electronic (IT) Devices in Healthcare Settings. [Internet] [Place Unknown] January 2018. [cited 2018 Apr 16] Available from: [https://ipac-canada.org/photos/custom/Members/pdf/18Jan15\\_Electronic%20Devices.pdf](https://ipac-canada.org/photos/custom/Members/pdf/18Jan15_Electronic%20Devices.pdf)