Glove Conservation Selection Guidance

May 16, 2020

Purpose
This document will serve as guidance on the use of nitrile vs vinyl medical exam gloves in order to promote safety and glove conservation during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Vinyl Exam Gloves
Vinyl exam gloves are typically made from polyvinyl chloride (PVC). They can be used for short-term clinical applications with low risk of exposure to potentially infectious materials. Vinyl gloves provide protection from contact with liquids and solids that are non-corrosive. Vinyl gloves should not be used for chemotherapy. Vinyl gloves are appropriate for use in non-direct patient care areas such as:

- Biomed/Clinical Engineering
- Delivery of Food/Nutrition trays/supplements
- Home Health/Clinics if working with patients where there is no anticipated contact with blood/body fluids and low risk of puncture (ie., taking a blood pressure or temperature)
- Facilities (Vinyl gloves are not appropriate for use with corrosive chemicals)
- Non-invasive imaging/radiology procedures
- Patient registration
- Patient Temperature screening stations
  - Isopropyl alcohol-based hand sanitizers are acceptable to use on vinyl gloves
  - If using ethanol-based hand sanitizer, change gloves every hour
- Transportation

Nitrile Exam Gloves
Nitrile exam gloves are made out of a synthetic rubber. These gloves are the best choice when it comes to resistance to punctures or infectious materials. They provide better protection against potentially infectious materials as well as protection from chemotherapy drugs and lab chemicals when compared to vinyl gloves. Nitrile gloves are appropriate for use in direct patient care areas such as:

- Emergency Department
- Environmental Services
- ICU/CCU
- Home Health/Clinics if working with patients where there is anticipated contact with blood/body fluids or risk of puncture
- Lab
- Laundry
- Med/Surg
- OB/Gyn
- Oncology
- Security