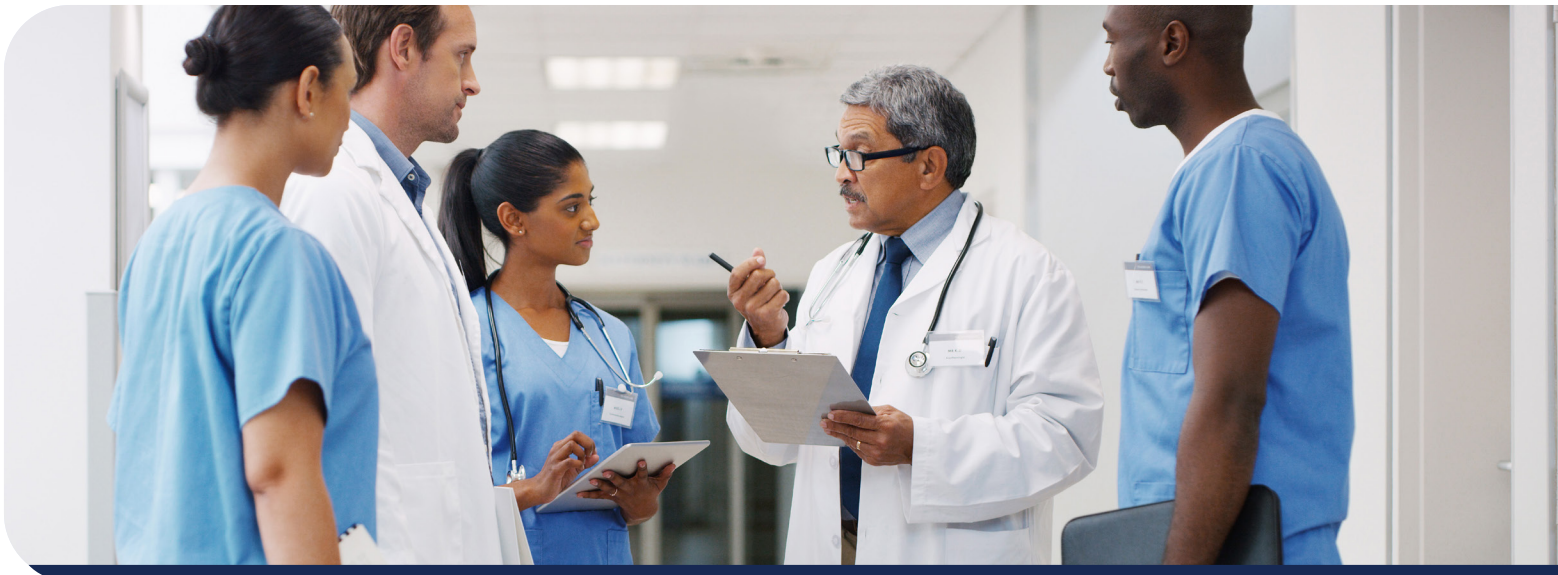


6 Linen and Laundry Tips for Infection Prevention at Your Healthcare Facility



Infection prevention should always be a high priority. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), proper linen and laundry management is a best practice for preventing the spread of infectious diseases. **Here are 6 key steps your healthcare center can take to practice daily infection prevention.**

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1 | Follow Regulations for Linen and Laundry Care

Familiarize your staff with the healthcare industry's most important regulations regarding infection prevention. Linen and laundry should always be handled and cleaned according to the highest standards from organizations like AORN, HLAC, OSHA, the EPA and the CDC. If you're partnering with a laundry/linen company, ask for proof they're following these practices. The CDC recommends washing/drying with a temperature that reaches at least 160° F for a minimum of 25 minutes to destroy microorganisms. If the cleaning equipment reaches only 125° to 135° F, like some standard washers/dryers, it won't be enough.

2 | Create a Routine Cleaning/ Inspection Schedule

Establish a cleaning schedule for gathering all linens and garments, having them washed and disinfected, and returning them to your facility's rooms and storage areas for staff use. Remember, the cleaning equipment and storage areas themselves must also be cleaned routinely to prevent the spread of dangerous microorganisms. Please note that microfiber mops remove 95% of bacteria while traditional standard cotton string mops only remove 68%. If microfiber is part of your cleaning process, ensure the full removal of bacteria. Our wash process removes 99.999% of common pathogens from microfiber to protect your facility.

3 | Separate and Contain Contaminated Linens

Soiled and contaminated medical scrubs, coats, curtains, and all other garments/linens should be stored separately from freshly-cleaned materials. Ideally, they'll be kept in closed and secure containers which can't be accidentally opened for access to the soiled linens until they're cleaned and ready for re-use. A professional healthcare laundry services provider will understand regulations and requirements and provide soiled linen containers, including hamper stands and drop lockers.

4 | Set Disinfection, Dead-on-Contact Standards

Determine your facility's washing and cleaning standards and ensure your in-house cleaners or outsourced partner can guarantee they will follow the rules. For example, based on EPA standards, a disinfectant should kill 99.999% of germs, compared to 99.9% for sanitizers. Also, the CDC recommends a temperature of at least 160° F for a minimum of 25 minutes to destroy microorganisms. Add extra layers of protection, like dead-on-contact rinses, bacteria-inhibiting softeners, and plastic storage bags for transport.

5 | Re-evaluate Your Infection Prevention Plan Regularly

An infection prevention plan shouldn't be a "set it and forget it" approach. Instead, it should be an ever-evolving strategy. New industry standards are always being introduced and public health crises require healthcare companies to make fast adjustments. Re-evaluate your plan monthly to determine whether it's still following regulations and meeting your needs.

6 | If You Can't Manage It, Outsource It

When it comes to safety, expertise matters. Seek expert assistance with infection prevention tasks and allow your staff to focus on patient care. Outsource your laundry and linen cleaning to an HLAC-adherent company that follows the industry's highest standards for cleaning and infection prevention.

Find out how our programs support your infection prevention goals.



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ImageFIRST is the largest national linen and laundry service provider specializing in the healthcare industry. As leaders in infection prevention, we currently own and operate the most HLAC-accredited facilities in the industry.