

## Research Compact

### Tags

Hand hygiene, hand disinfection, medical disposable gloves

### Title

## The indication-appropriate use of disposable medical gloves in patient care: Is there a need for action?

### Source

2023, Epidemiologisches Bulletin, Issue 18, RKI

### Introduction

The WHO's International Hand Hygiene Day serves annually to draw attention to hand hygiene as the most effective single measure for breaking chains of infection, especially in medical facilities. However, not least due to the Corona pandemic, there is an increased "universal wearing" of disposable gloves in facilities, often to the detriment of hand hygiene compliance. For this reason, the RKI is providing information on the appropriate use of disposable medical gloves on the occasion of Hand Hygiene Day.

### Content

#### How should disposable medical gloves be used according to the indication?

#### For protection against infections according to KRINKO recommendations<sup>1,2,3</sup> e.g.,



In the care and treatment of patients with transmissible diseases.



For invasive procedures, punctures and injections.

#### In case of direct contact with contaminated surfaces and contact with potentially infectious material - in addition to hand hygiene<sup>1,5</sup> e.g.,



Protection of the wearer from contamination with blood, secretions and excretions.



For pathogens that are insensitive to alcohol-based hand disinfection (e.g. Clostridioides spores).

#### When should disposable medical gloves be changed?<sup>1</sup>



When hygienic hand hygiene is indicated; 5 moments of hand hygiene.<sup>6</sup>

- BEFORE patient contact.
- BEFORE aseptic procedures.
- AFTER contact with potentially infectious material.
- AFTER patient contact.
- AFTER contact with the direct patient environment.

#### When are disposable medical gloves not indicated?<sup>3</sup> e.g.,



Contact with intact skin as part of basic hygiene.



Vaccinations and other activities without contact with potentially infectious material.

#### Risks associated with "universal wearing" of disposable medical gloves<sup>1,4,5,7</sup>



Neglecting compliance to hand hygiene.

- Risk of microperforation increases with the length of time the gloves are worn
- Contamination when gloves are removed
- Glove box may be contaminated
- Resource burden for production, transport and disposal

### Conclusion

**Wearing disposable medical gloves provides additional protection when used as indicated, but in no case replaces hygienic hand disinfection.**

### Additional Sources

1 Bundesgesundheitsbl 2016 · 59:1189–1220, DOI 10.1007/s00103-016-2416-6 /  
2 Bundesgesundheitsbl 2015 · 58:1151–1170, DOI 10.1007/s00103-015-2234-2  
3 Epid Bull 2021(26):13-5, „Anforderungen an die Hygiene bei Punktionen und Injektionen“  
4 Bellini C et al., Swiss Med Wkly 2022;152:w30110

5 Epid Bull 2019;19:161-4, Wie eine zweite Haut? Vom Nutzen und Risiko bei der Verwendung von pathogenfreien medizinischen Einmalhandschuhen  
6 WHO Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Health Care, 2009  
7 Chirurgie 2023;94:220–229, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00104-022-01784-8>

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This document mainly summarizes the German recommendations for the topics mentioned - the recommendations applicable in the respective region must be observed.