

Reprocessing of Basic Life Support Training Equipment

To reduce the risk of cross-infection between staff during basic life support (BLS) practical training, reusable equipment must be adequately reprocessed.

What equipment should be considered?

Any equipment contacting oral mucosa during BLS practical training must be reprocessed between uses. Manikin faces and resuscitation masks are the most common such devices.

Equipment denoted as **single-use** by symbols on the device or in written instructions must always be discarded after use and not reprocessed¹. Manikin lungs must not be reprocessed.

Manikin bodies should be cleaned regularly according to the manufacturer's instructions.

What are the potential infection risks?

During use, BLS training equipment may be contaminated with oral secretions/saliva, which are a potential source of viruses and bacteria. BLS training must be deferred for staff with any respiratory illness and/or oral lesions, however infectious agents may still be transmitted during BLS training without participants being symptomatic.

What reprocessing methods are available?

Always refer to the manufacturer's instructions for the recommended chemicals and processes before reprocessing BLS training equipment.

BLS training equipment is classed as semi-critical per Spaulding's classification and requires cleaning followed by high level disinfection (HLD) before reuse³. Common methods include:

- > **Thermal Disinfection** – Washer-disinfectors automate both the cleaning and HLD steps of reprocessing, and are located in the sterilising department. These machines perform HLD at various temperature/time combinations, so the sterilising department must confirm the compatibility of BLS training equipment with the cycles used. Temperatures exceeding the equipment manufacturer's specifications may adversely affect manikin materials.
- > **Chemical Disinfection** – HLD of BLS equipment can be achieved by immersion in a chemical disinfectant for the specified time. Items must first be manually cleaned in a warm detergent solution following the manufacturer's instructions. Thorough rinsing and drying of items is required after disinfection to remove chemical residue and prevent recontamination.

Which chemicals are appropriate for disinfection of BLS equipment?

Sodium hypochlorite (NaClO) is an effective chemical disinfectant for BLS equipment. NaClO is commonly found in bleach but a NaClO solution intended for use on medical devices should be used.. Other hard surface disinfectants may contain incompatible agents and should not be used on BLS training equipment.

- > *Laerdal recommends immersion in 0.5 % sodium hypochlorite (e.g. a 1:10 dilution of 5% NaClO) for 10 minutes.*
- > *Sodium dichloroisocyanurate (NaDCC) products e.g. Milton® tablets do not reach the conditions required for HLD and should not be used on BLS training equipment.*

How should the items be stored?

After HLD, items must be stored in a manner that maintains their state of reprocessing³. Manikin faces and resuscitation masks should be kept in a sealed, non-porous container that is regularly cleaned. Only handle these items at the point of use after performing hand hygiene.

References

1. SA Health Fact Sheet - Single Use Medical Devices
<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/70411000411d3ae484e2cc189ce06e0d/FactSheet-single-use-devices-v1.4-ics-20200331.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE-70411000411d3ae484e2cc189ce06e0d-nKQ9rFV>
2. Australian Resuscitation Council (2021) *Guideline 10.3 Good Practice Statement: Minimum Hygiene Requirements for Resuscitation and First Aid Training*
<https://www.anzcor.org/home/education-and-implementation/guideline-10-3-good-practice-statement-minimum-hygiene-requirements-for-resuscitation-and-first-aid-training/>
3. Standards Australia (2023) *AS5369 Reprocessing of reusable medical devices and other devices in health and non-health related facilities*

For more information

Infection Control Service
Communicable Disease Control Branch
Telephone: 1300 232 272
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/infectionprevention

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