

Decontamination Procedures

Environmental Decontamination:

Standard bleach diluted 1 part bleach to 9 parts water (3/4 cup of concentrated bleach is equivalent to 1 cup of standard bleach) or an EPA approved phenolic disinfectant

Note: Standard bleach is often referred to as 5.0% - 6.5% sodium hypochlorite and the final diluted product is 0.5% sodium hypochlorite

Sodium hypochlorite is rapidly deactivated by the presence of organic material, so if organic material is present (dirt, blood, etc) then make sure that plenty of bleach is used. Flood the spill with bleach for 5 minutes. If the temperature is cold, then leave the bleach for 30 mins. Refer to decontamination guidelines for other infectious agents such as hepatitis B

Diluted bleach solution must be made up fresh as needed because it degrades with time

Personal Decontamination:

DO NOT USE BLEACH to decontaminate persons

Use soap and water to wash down persons exposed (or potentially exposed)

Place clothing from suspected victims in a plastic bag, close and seal. Save for law enforcement

If dealing with smallpox, then all **fomites** (bedding, clothing) should be autoclaved or laundered in hot water and bleach)

Equipment decontamination:

Check with the manufacturer's instruction. Bleach may damage many pieces of equipment

0.5% sodium hypochlorite

Note: bleach is corrosive and damages most fabrics, so items must be thoroughly rinsed. Metal surfaces should be treated after completion of the decontamination to stop the corrosion

Other sporocidal disinfectants are also available.

Autoclaving and incineration where appropriate

Food Decontamination:

Staphylococcal enterotoxin B; *Clostridium botulinum* toxin and other contaminated food: Destroy any contaminated food.

For all decontamination procedures, first minimize human and animal exposure and then determine that appropriate specimens have been taken for public health and law enforcement.