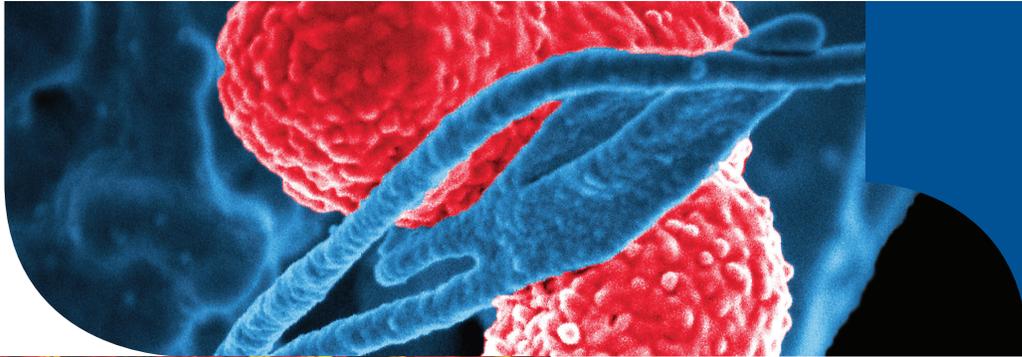
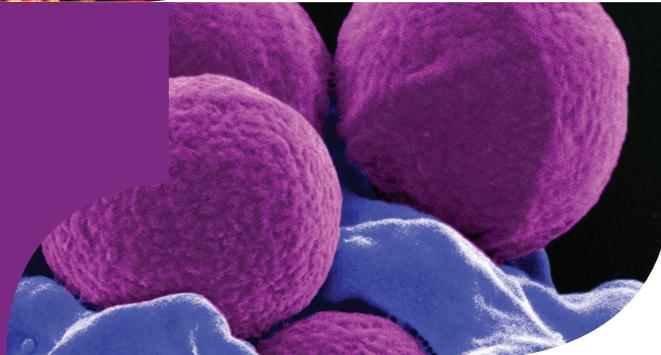




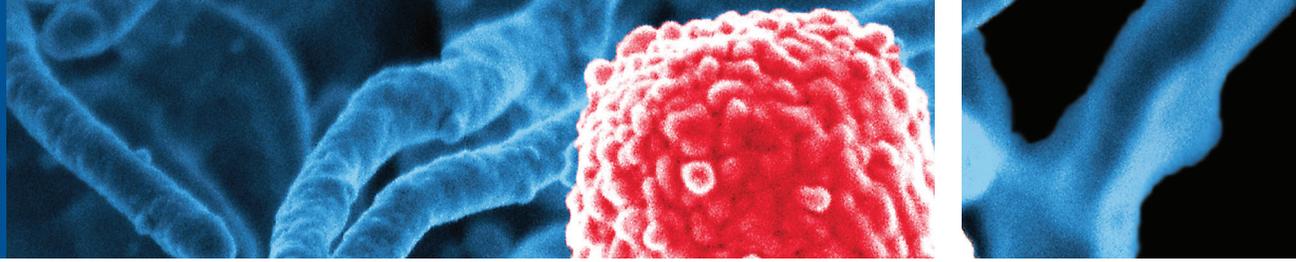
National Institute of  
Environmental Health Sciences



# Pathogen Safety Data (PSD) Glossary



OCTOBER 2016

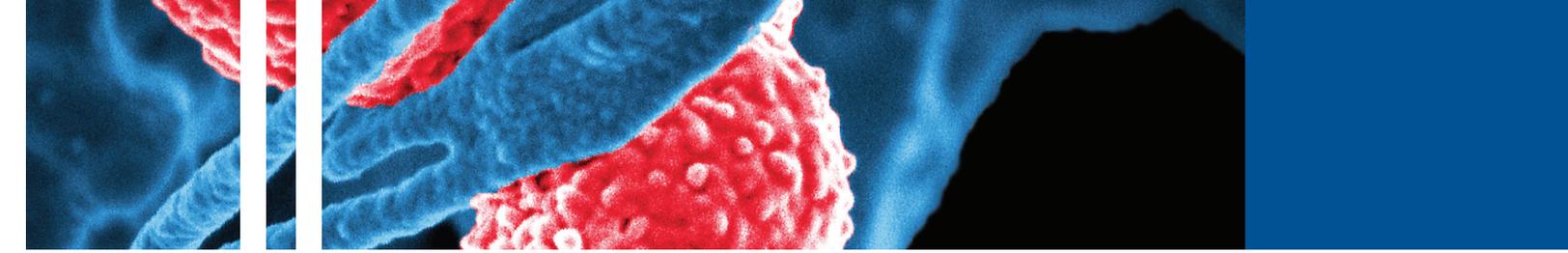


# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>A</b> .....	3
<b>B</b> .....	6
<b>C</b> .....	7
<b>D</b> .....	11
<b>E</b> .....	12
<b>F</b> .....	14
<b>G</b> .....	15
<b>H</b> .....	15
<b>I</b> .....	18
<b>J</b> .....	21
<b>K</b> .....	22
<b>L</b> .....	22
<b>M</b> .....	23
<b>N</b> .....	23
<b>O</b> .....	25
<b>P</b> .....	25
<b>Q</b> .....	26
<b>R</b> .....	26
<b>S</b> .....	26
<b>T</b> .....	27
<b>U</b> .....	28
<b>V</b> .....	29
<b>W, X, Y, Z</b> .....	29

*This is not an all-inclusive glossary for infectious disease or infection control and prevention. The goal of this glossary is to include terms that may be commonly found within pathogen safety data resources. Terms pertinent to microorganisms and/or their disease-states may be found on the National Library of Medicine, Public Health Agency of Canada, World Health Organization, and/or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention websites.*

*Cover photos credit National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID);*



## A

**Abscess**—A swelling in a body tissue filled with pus and often containing a disease microorganism.

**Administrative controls**—The use of administrative measures (i.e., policies and procedures and enforcement measures) to reduce the risk of exposure to pathogenic organisms.)

**Aerobe**—An organism that requires oxygen for life and reproduction

**Aerosol**—Particles of respirable size (<10 µm) generated by both humans and environmental sources that can remain viable and airborne for extended periods in the indoor environment.

**Aerosol-generating procedures**—Procedures that may increase potential exposure to aerosol transmissible disease pathogens due to the reasonably anticipated aerosolization of pathogens. Aerosol-generating procedures may also be known as high hazard or cough-inducing procedures

**Aerosol transmissible disease (ATD) or aerosol transmissible disease pathogen**—Any disease or pathogen requiring Airborne Precautions and/or Droplet Precautions.

**Alimentary**—Relating to the entire system for receiving and processing food. The system is often referred to as the alimentary canal.

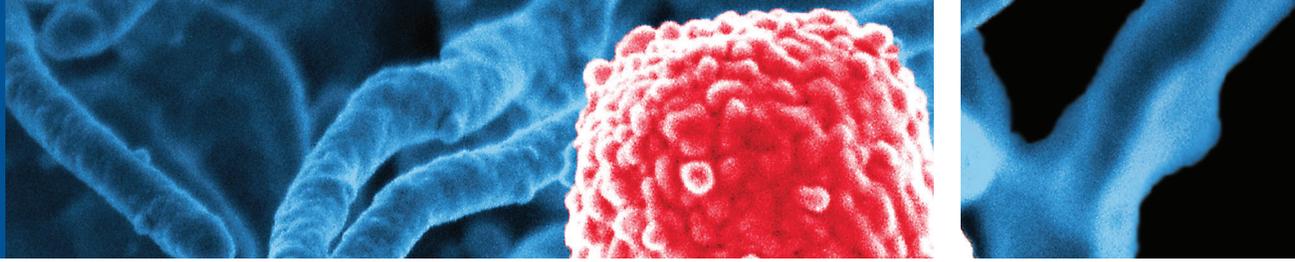
**Airborne infection isolation room (AIIR)**—A single-occupancy patient-care room designed to isolate persons with suspected or confirmed airborne infectious diseases. Environmental factors are controlled in AIIRs to minimize the transmission of infectious agents that can be spread from person to person by the airborne route. AIIRs should maintain negative pressure relative to adjacent rooms and halls (so that air flows under the door gap into the room), an air flow rate of 6–12 air changes per hour, and direct exhaust of air from the room to the outside of the building or recirculation of air through a HEPA filter.

**Airborne precautions**—Actions taken to prevent or minimize the transmission of infectious agents or organisms that remain infectious when suspended in the air.

**Airborne transmission**—Spread of pathogens through the air by means of inhalation of infectious particles. Particles up to 100 µm in size are considered inhalable (inspirable).

**Air-purifying respirator (APR)**—A respirator with an air-purifying filter, cartridge, or canister that removes specific air contaminants by passing ambient air through an air-purifying element.

**Alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR)**—A method of hand hygiene that includes an alcohol-containing preparation designed for application to the hands for reducing the number of viable microorganisms on the hands. ABHR is not an alternative for washing with soap and water if hands are visibly soiled.



---

**Allergen**—An antigen, a substance capable of inducing allergy or specific hypersensitivity.

---

**Anaerobe**—An organism that does not require oxygen for life and reproduction.

---

**Anaphylaxis (immediate anaphylactic hypersensitivity)**—A severe and sometimes fatal Type 1 reaction in a susceptible person after a second exposure to a specific antigen (e.g., food, pollen, proteins in latex gloves, or penicillin) after previous sensitization. Anaphylaxis is characterized commonly by respiratory symptoms, itching, hives, and rarely by shock and death (anaphylactic shock).

---

**Antibiotic**—Type of antimicrobial agent made from a mold or a bacterium that kills, or slows the growth of other microbes, specifically bacteria. Examples include penicillin and streptomycin.

---

**Antibiotics resistance**—The phenomenon in which bacteria acquire genes that allow them to survive in the presence of antibacterial drugs.

---

**Antibody**—A protein found in the blood that is produced in response to foreign substances (e.g., antigens) invading the body. Antibodies protect the body from disease by binding to these organisms and destroying them.

---

**Antifungal**—Drugs that stop or slow the growth of fungus

---

**Antigen**—A foreign substance, usually protein or carbohydrate substance (as a toxin or enzyme) capable of stimulating an immune response, usually the production of antibodies.

---

**Anthelmintics**—Drugs that stop or slow the growth of parasitic worms.

---

**Antimicrobial**—A substance that kills or inhibits the growth of micro-organisms.

---

**Antimicrobial agents**—A general term for the drugs, chemicals, or other substances that either kill or slow the growth of microbes. Among the antimicrobial agents in use today are antibacterial drugs (which kill bacteria), antiviral agents (which kill viruses), antifungal agents (which kill fungi), and anti- parasitic drugs (which kill parasites).

---

**Antimicrobial resistance**—The result of microbes changing in ways that reduce or eliminate the effectiveness of drugs, chemicals, or other agents to cure or prevent infections. Examples include multi- drug resistant organisms (MDROs) such as methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), and vancomycin-resistant enterococci (VRE). Also known as drug resistance.

---

**Antimicrobial soap**—A soap (i.e., detergent) containing an antiseptic agent.

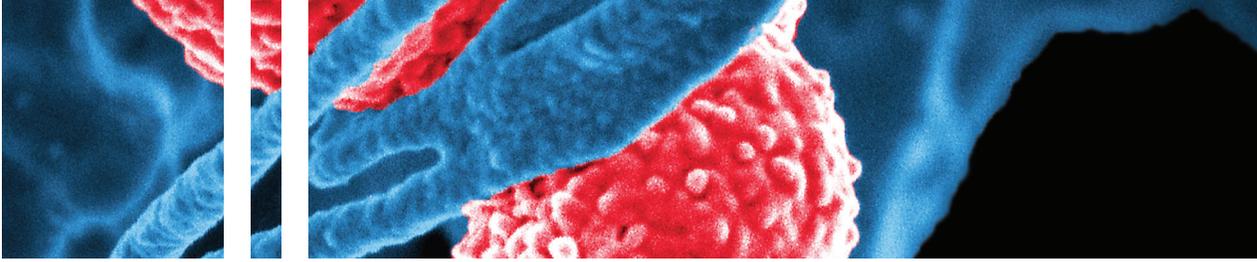
---

**Antisepsis**—The use of chemical or physical methods to destroy or inhibit micro-organisms on living tissues having the effect of limiting or preventing the harmful results of infection.

---

**Antiseptic**—A germicide that is used on skin or living tissue for the purpose of inhibiting or destroying microorganisms. Examples include alcohols, chlorhexidine, chlorine, hexachlorophene, and iodine.

---



---

**Antiseptic handwash**—Washing hands with water and soap or detergents containing an antiseptic agent. Antiseptic hand rub. The process of applying an antiseptic hand-rub product to all surfaces of the hands to reduce the number of microorganisms present.

---

**Antiviral**—Drugs used to stop or slow the growth of viruses.

---

**Autoimmune Diseases**—Diseases characterized by inflammation and destruction of the body's tissues caused by the body's immune defense system.

---

**APIC**—See Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology

---

**Asepsis**—Prevention from contamination with microorganisms. Includes sterile conditions on tissues, on materials, and in rooms, as obtained by excluding, removing, or killing organisms.

---

**Aseptic Procedure**—Method designed to prevent contamination from microorganisms. It involves applying sterile gloves, sterile gowns and other sterile equipment as needed.

---

**Asphyxia**—A lack of oxygen in the blood; suffocation.

---

**Assigned protection factor (APF)**—The workplace level of respiratory protection that a respirator or class of respirators is expected to provide to employees when the employer implements a continuing, effective respiratory protection program as specified in 29 CFR 1910.134. Types of respirators (e.g. PAPRs, N95s) differ in their assigned protection factor.

---

**Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC)**—A voluntary membership organization representing individuals occupationally or professionally involved in the practice and management of infection prevention and control or the application of epidemiology, such as infection preventionists. APIC develops resources and standards, provides educational opportunities, and plays a leadership role in communicating with partners.

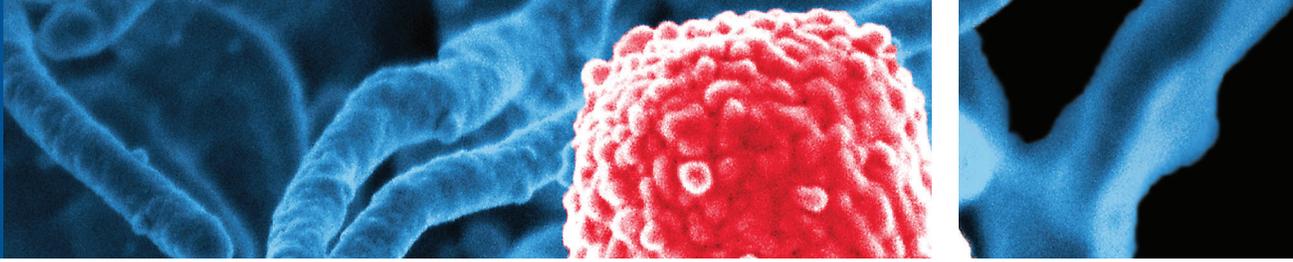
---

**Asymptomatic carrier**—A person who shows no signs of illness, yet is able to transmit the disease to others.

---

**Attack rate**—Describes the proportion of individuals who experience disease over a period of time.

---



## B

**Bacteraemia**—Presence of micro-organisms in the bloodstream. See Bloodstream infection

**Bacteria**—Single-celled organisms that live in and around us. Bacteria may be helpful, but in certain conditions may cause illnesses such as strep throat, most ear infections, and pneumonia.

**Bacteriophage**—A virus that infects bacteria.

**Bacterial count**—A method of estimating the number of bacteria per unit sample. The term also refers to the estimated number of bacteria per unit sample, usually expressed as colony-forming units (CFUs) per square centimeter (cm<sup>2</sup>) per milliliter (ml).

**Bacterial endocarditis**—A bacterial induced inflammation of the lining of the heart and its valves.

**Barriers**—Barriers protect people and property from adverse events. Questions assess barrier strength, fault tolerance, function and interaction/relationship to Rules/Policies/Procedures and Environment/Equipment

**Barrier precautions**—Any method or device used to decrease contact with potentially infectious body fluids. Examples may include masks, gloves, and gowns.

**B cells**—Cells of the host's immune system that produce antibodies.

**BBP**—See Blood borne Pathogens Standard

**Bead sterilizer (endodontic dry heat sterilizer)**—A device that used small glass beads (1.2–1.5 mm diameter) and high temperature (217–232°C) for brief exposures (e.g., 45 seconds) to inactivate microorganisms. The term is a misnomer because it is not cleared by the FDA as a sterilizer.

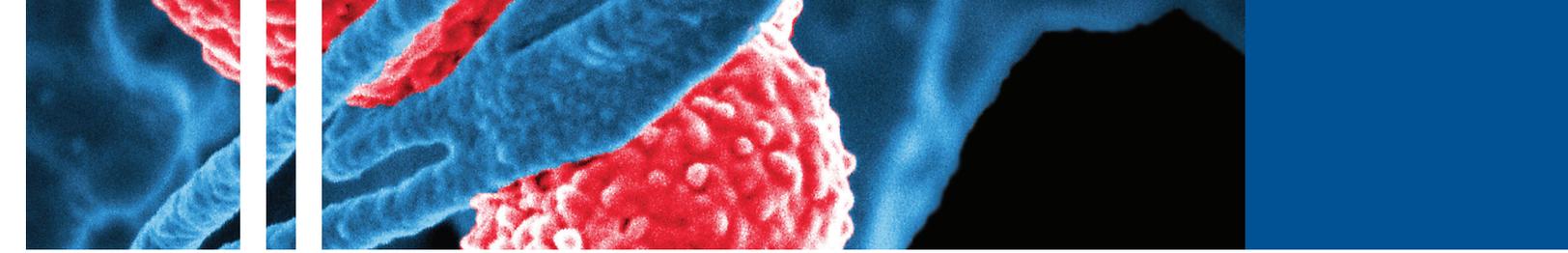
**Bioburden**—The microbiological load (i.e., number of viable organisms in or on the object or surface) or organic material on a surface or object prior to decontamination, or sterilization, also known as “bioload” or “microbial load.”

**Biological indicator**—A device to monitor the sterilization process that consists of a standardized population bacterial spores known to be resistant to the mode of sterilization being monitored. Biological indicators indicate that all the parameters necessary for sterilization were present.

**Biofilm**—A film of proteins and micro-organisms that form over the surface of foreign material when it is in contact with tissue. This can act as a reservoir for infection and will be protected from antimicrobial treatment due to the glycoprotein film.

**Biopsy**—The removal of a sample of tissue or cells from the body for examination. A pathologist usually does the examination of the tissue or cells. The tissue or cells are generally examined under a microscope to determine the presence of any abnormality.

**Bloodborne Pathogen**—Infectious microorganisms in human blood that can cause



disease in humans. Spread by contact with blood or other body fluids from an infected person. Examples include Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV, Ebola Virus.

---

**Bloodborne Pathogens Standard (BBP)**—A standard developed, promulgated, and enforced by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) directing employers to protect employees from occupational exposure to blood and other potentially infectious material.

---

**Bloodstream infection**—A condition in which bacteria enter the blood. This may occur through a wound or infection, or through a surgical procedure or injection. See Bacteremia

---

**Body fluids**—Blood; excretions like urine, feces, vomit, meconium, lochia; secretions like saliva, tears, sperm, colostrum, milk, mucous secretions, wax, vernix; exudates and transudates like lymphatic, pleural fluid, cerebrospinal fluid, ascitis fluid, articular fluid, pus (except sweat); organic samples like tissues, cells, organ, bone marrow, placenta.

---

**Bronchitis**—Inflamed bronchi, usually because of a viral or bacterial infection. Chronic bronchitis is not caused by infection and is actually a form of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Symptoms of acute bronchitis include heavy coughing, shortness of breath, wheezing, and phlegm production.

---

**Broad-spectrum antibiotics**—Antibiotics effective against a large number of bacterial species. It generally describes antibiotics effective against both gram-positive and gram-negative classes of bacteria.

---

**Bronchial**—Relating to the air passages from the throat to the lungs.

## C

---

**Capillaries**—Delicate blood vessels forming a dense network between the arteries and the veins. The interchange of cellular oxygen, nutrients, and waste products takes place in the capillary beds.

---

**Carrier**—An individual who is found to be colonized at one or more body sites with an organism, but has no signs or symptoms of active infection.

---

**Case**—A person with symptoms.

---

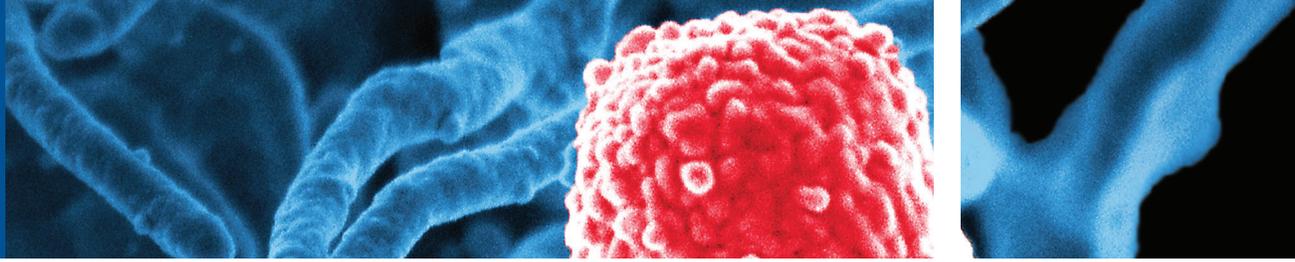
**Catheter**—A tubular, flexible surgical instrument that is inserted into a body opening to withdraw or introduce fluid.

---

**Catheter-Associated Urinary Tract Infection (CAUTI)**—The presence of symptoms or signs attributable to microorganisms and infection (CAUTI) that have invaded the urinary tract, where the person has, or has recently had a urinary catheter.

---

**Catheter-Related Bloodstream Infection (CRBSI)**—An infection of the bloodstream where micro-organisms are found in a blood culture taken from a peripheral vein of a patient with a CVAD, the patient has clinical signs of infection (e.g. fever, chills, hypotension) and there is no other apparent source for the infection. For surveillance



purposes this often refers to BSI that occur in patients with a CVAD and where other possible sources of infection have been excluded. A more rigorous definition is where the same micro-organism is cultured from the tip of the catheter as grown from the blood; simultaneous quantitative blood cultures with at least a 5 to 1 ratio of micro-organisms cultured from the CVAD versus peripheral; differential time to positivity of at least 2 hours for peripheral cultures versus from CVAD.

---

**CAUTI**—See catheter-associated urinary tract infection

---

**CDC**—See Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

---

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**—A federal agency of the U.S. government that provides facilities and services for the investigation, identification, prevention, and control of disease and is a global leader in public health.

---

**Central line**—A flexible tube that is inserted near a patient's heart or into one of the large blood vessels near the heart. A central line can be used to administer fluids, antibiotics, or medical treatments.

---

**Central line-associated bloodstream infection (CLABSI)**—An infection that spreads through the blood from its origin on a central line. A CLABSI rate is usually calculated per 1,000 (the total number of CLABSIs divided by the total number of central line days, multiplied by 1,000).

---

**Central Venous Access Device (CVAD)**—A vascular catheter inserted (from a variety of sites) with the tip located in the superior vena cava. CVADs are used for giving multiple infusions, medication or hemotherapy, temporary haemodialysis, monitoring of central venous pressure and frequent blood sampling.

---

**Cerebral**—Relating to the area of the brain.

---

**Chemical indicator**—A device to monitor the sterilization process that changes color or form with exposure to one or more of the physical conditions within the sterilizing chamber (e.g., temperature, steam). Chemical indicators are intended to detect potential sterilization failures that could result from incorrect packaging, incorrect loading of the sterilizer, or malfunctions of the sterilizer. A “pass” response does not verify that the items are sterile.

---

**Chemical sterilant**—Chemicals used for the purpose of destroying all forms of microbial life including bacterial spores.

---

**Chemoprophylaxis**—The administration of antimicrobial agents to prevent the development of an infection or the progression of an infection to active disease.

---

**Chlorhexidine soap**—A topical antimicrobial agent used to treat or help prevent infections.

---

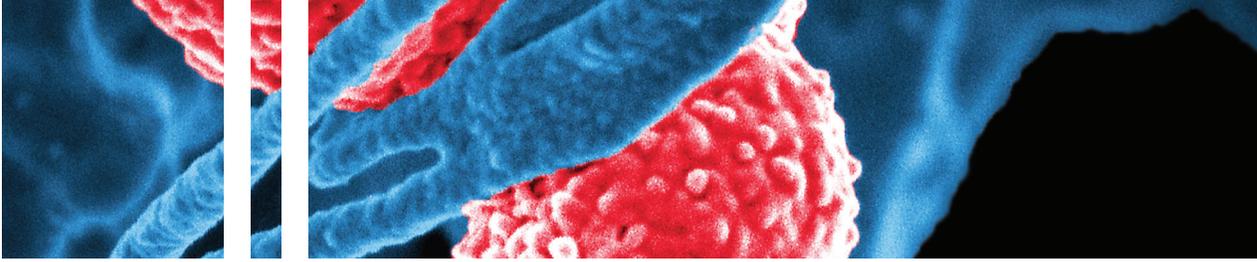
**Circulatory**—Relating to the transportation of blood around the body.

---

**CLABSI**—See central line-associated bloodstream infection

---

**Clean Procedure**—Method designed to minimize contamination. It involves the use of routine hand washing, hand drying and use of non-sterile gloves.



---

**Cleaning**—The removal of visible soil, organic, and inorganic contamination from a device or surface, using either the physical action of scrubbing with a surfactant or detergent and water or an energy- based process with appropriate chemical agents.

---

**Clinically-Acquired Infection**—Infection acquired during clinical/therapeutic care; not present or incubating at the start of care/treatment.

---

**Close Call**—A close call is an event or situation that could have resulted in an accident, injury or illness, but did not, either by chance or through timely intervention. Such events have also been referred to as *near miss* incidents. Close Calls receive the same level of scrutiny as adverse events that result in actual injury. As with adverse events, all Close Calls require reporting and documentation.

---

**Cohort**—A group of patients infected or colonized with the same micro-organism, grouped together in a designated area of a unit or ward.

---

**Cohorting**—The practice of grouping patients infected or colonized with the same infectious agent together to confine their care to one area and prevent contact with susceptible patients.

---

**Colonization**—The presence of microorganisms on or within body sites without symptoms, detectable host immune response, cellular damage, or clinical expression. Colonized individuals may become a source of transmission.

---

**Colony-forming unit (CFU)**—The minimum number of separable cells on the surface of or in semi-solid agar medium which gives rise to a visible colony of progeny is on the order of tens of millions. CFUs may consist of pairs, chains, and clusters as well as single cells and are often expressed as colony-forming units per milliliter (CFU/ml).

---

**Commensal**—A micro-organism resident in or on a body site without causing clinical infection.

---

**Communicable disease**—An infectious or contagious disease spread from person to person, animal to person, or contaminated object or material to person.

---

**Communicable Period**—The time in the natural history of an infection during which transmission may take place.

---

**Community-acquired infections**—See community-associated infections

---

**Community-associated infections (CA)**—Infections that are contracted outside of a healthcare facility and are present or develop within a designated period of time. Formerly known as community-acquired infections.

---

**Contact**—An exposed individual who might have been infected through transmission from another host or the environment.

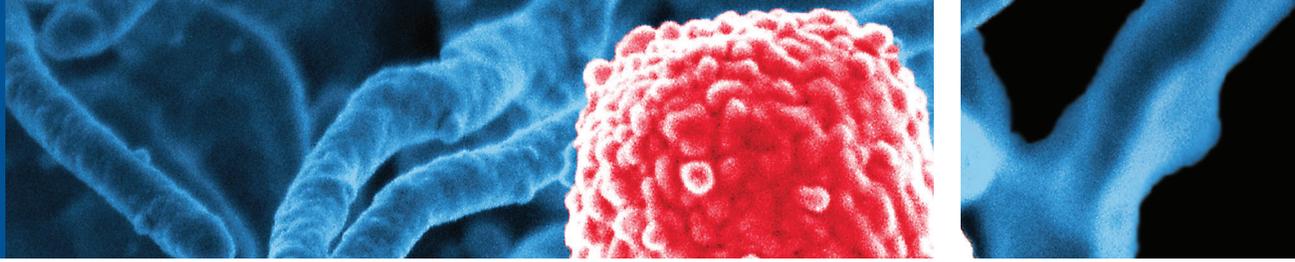
---

**Contact precautions**—Type of transmission-based precautions that requires barrier precautions for direct contact with resident or objects/surfaces contaminated with an infectious agent.

---

**Contagion**—An infectious disease spread through direct or indirect contact.

---



---

**Contagious**—Capable of transmitting a disease to others.

---

**Contaminated**—State of having been in contact with microorganisms. As used in health care, it generally refers to microorganisms capable of producing disease or infection.

---

**Contamination**—The presence of an infectious agent on a body surface or on clothes, gowns, gloves, bedding, furniture, computer keyboards, or other inanimate objects that may be capable of producing disease or infection.

---

**Contributing Factor**—Contributing factors are additional reasons, not necessarily the most basic reason that an event has occurred.

---

**Control**—Control refers to the strategies implemented to reduce the magnitude, spread, and progression of a disease in a population.

---

**Critical**—The category of medical devices or instruments that are introduced directly into the human body, either into or in contact with the bloodstream or normally sterile areas of the body (e.g., surgical scalpel) These items are so called because of the substantial risk of acquiring infection if the item is contaminated with microorganisms at the time of use.

---

**Critical Site**—Critical sites are areas associated with risk of infection. They either correspond to body sites or medical devices that have to be protected against harmful germs. Areas on the body are called ‘critical sites with risk of infection for the patient’—‘Critical sites with body fluid exposure risk’ are body sites or medical devices that potentially lead to hand exposure to body fluids and bloodborne pathogens.

---

**Cutaneous**—Relating to the skin.

---

**Cytokines**—Host proteins that play an important role in the controlling the reactions of the host immune system.

---

**Cytotoxin**—A chemical that kills cells.

## D

---

**Debridement**—Used to clean dead and contaminated material from a wound to aid in healing, increase the tissue’s ability to resist infection, and decrease inflammation. It can also be performed to get a tissue sample for testing and diagnosis. The procedure is most often performed for the following reasons:

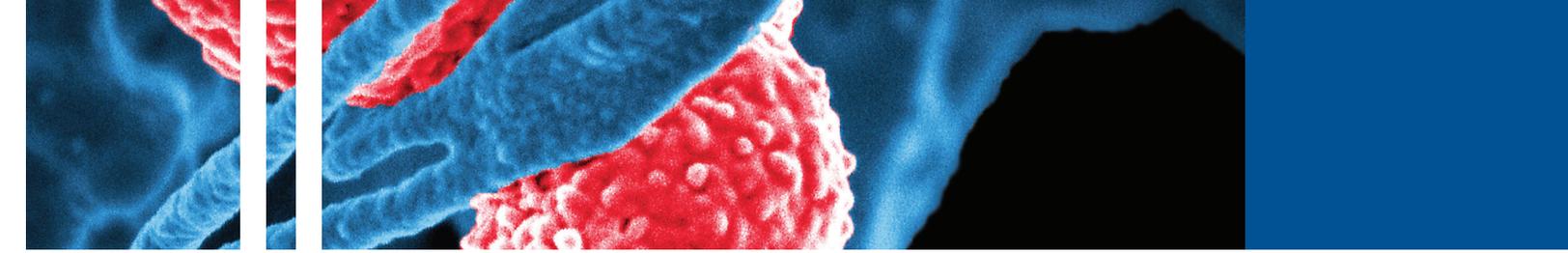
- To remove tissue contaminated by bacteria, foreign tissue, dead cells, or a crust
- To create a neat wound edge to decrease scarring
- To aid in healing very severe burns or pressure sores (decubitus ulcers)

---

**Decolonization therapy**—Topical and/or systemic antibiotic treatment used with the intention of eliminating carriage (colonization) of a microorganism.

---

**Decontamination**—A process or treatment that renders a medical device, instrument, or environmental surface safe to handle because it is no longer capable of transmitting



particles of infectious material.

---

**Dehydration**—An excessive loss of water from the tissues of the body.

---

**Denominator**—Number of people who are potentially capable of experiencing an event or outcome of interest. The denominator, along with the numerator, is used to calculate a rate. The denominator is the bottom half of a fraction.

---

**Department of Health**—Public health agency, providing regulation, inspection, licensing, emergency response, education and other programs to measure and protect the health of residents. The health department works to protect and improve the health of people in the geographic area it serves (state or local).

---

**Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)**—The United States government's principal agency for protecting the health of all Americans. HHS' Medicare program is the nation's largest health insurer, handling more than 1 billion claims per year. Medicare and Medicaid together provide health care insurance for one in four Americans. HHS works closely with State and Local Governments and many HHS-funded services are provided at the local level by state or county agencies. The Department's programs are administered by 11 operating divisions, including eight agencies in the U.S. Public Health Service.

---

**Detergents**—Compounds that possess a cleaning action and have hydrophilic and lipophilic parts. Although products used for handwashing or antiseptic hand wash in a health-care setting represent various types of detergents, the term "soap" is used to refer to such detergents in this guideline. Detergents make no antimicrobial claims on the label.

---

**Direct contact transmission**—Physical transfer of microorganisms between a susceptible host and an infected or colonized person.

---

**Disease**—A term used to describe a disorder of structure or function in a human, animal or plant.

---

**Disinfectant**—A chemical agent used on inanimate (non-living) objects to destroy virtually all recognized pathogenic microorganisms, but not necessarily all microbial forms (e.g., bacterial spores).

---

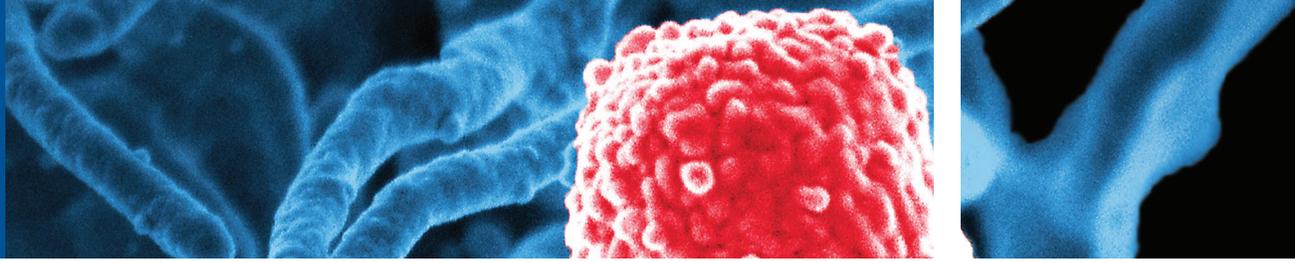
**Disinfection**—The destruction of pathogenic and other kinds of microorganisms by physical or chemical means. Disinfection is less lethal than sterilization, because it destroys most recognized pathogenic microorganisms, but not necessarily all microbial forms, such as bacterial spores.

---

**Droplets**—Small particles of moisture that may be generated when a person coughs or sneezes or when water is converted to a fine mist by an aerator or shower head. Droplets may contain infectious microorganisms and tend to quickly settle out from the air; therefore, risk of disease transmission is generally limited to persons in close proximity to the droplet source.

---

**Droplet precautions**—Actions designed to reduce and prevent the transmission of pathogens spread through close respiratory or mucous membrane contact with respiratory secretions.



---

**Droplet nuclei**—Particles 5µm diameter or less that are formed by dehydration of airborne droplets containing microorganisms that can remain suspended in the air for long periods of time.

---

**Drug resistance**—See antibiotic resistance

---

## E

---

**Edema**—Localized swelling.

---

**Endemic**—A disease that is common in a population.

---

**Efficacy**—Effectiveness; the ability of a drug to cure or control an illness.

---

**Emerging Infections**—Any infectious disease that has come to medical attention within the last two decades or for which there is a threat that its prevalence will increase in the near future.

---

**Emesis**—Vomiting.

---

**Endogenous Infection**—Micro-organisms originating from the patient's own body which cause harm in another body site.

---

**Endotoxin**—A toxin produced by certain bacteria. For example, *Clostridium difficile* toxin can cause diarrhea.

---

**Engineering Controls**—Methods that are built into the design of a site, equipment or process to minimize hazards. Engineering controls are a very reliable way to control worker exposures as long as the controls are designed, used and maintained properly.

---

**Epidemic**—An unusual, higher than expected level of infection or disease by a common agent in a defined population in a given period.

---

**Epidemiologically important pathogens**—Infectious agents that have one or more of the following characteristics—1) are readily transmissible; 2) have a proclivity toward causing outbreaks; 3) may be associated with a severe outcome; or 4) are difficult to treat. Examples include *Acinetobacter*, MRSA, and *C. difficile*.

---

**Epidemiology**—The study of the distribution and determinants of disease in human populations. Epidemiologists are often sent to investigate outbreaks.

---

**Erythema**—Feeling of warmth in a diseased area often accompanies edema.

---

**Erythromycin**—A common antibiotic used to treat infections caused by group A *Streptococci*.

---

**ESBL**—See extended-spectrum β-lactamase

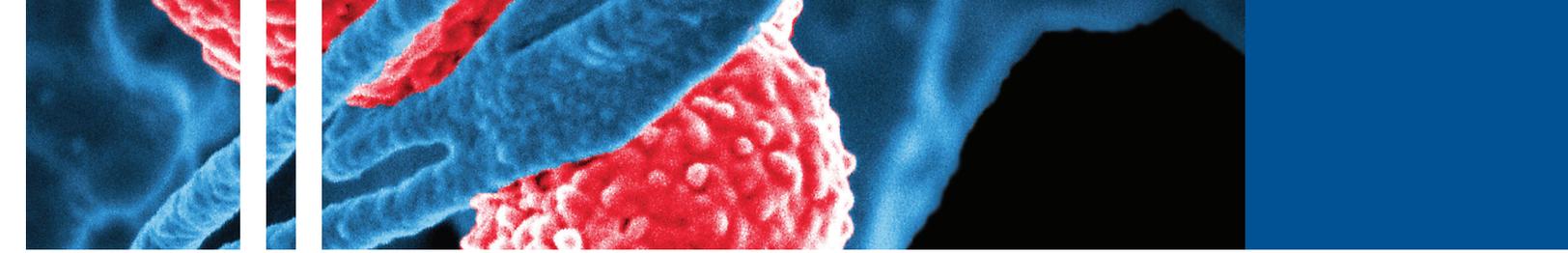
---

**Etiology**—in the infectious disease studies, the root cause of a disease.

---

**Event-related packaging**—a storage practice that recognizes that a package and its contents should remain sterile until some event causes the item(s) to become

---



contaminated.

---

**Excision**—Surgical removal, as in the excision of a tumor.

---

**Exogenous Infection**—Micro-organisms originating from a source or reservoir which are transmitted by any mechanism to a person, i.e. contact or airborne routes.

---

**Exhalation**—The process by which air is released from the lungs.

---

**Exposure time**—Period of time during a sterilization or disinfection process in which items are exposed to the sterilant or disinfectant at the parameters specified by the manufacturer, including time, concentration, temperature, pressure.

---

**Extended-spectrum  $\beta$ -lactamase (ESBL)**— $\beta$ -lactamases are enzymes that destroy certain antibiotics; ESBLs are bacteria that have acquired these enzymes and become resistant to those drugs.

---

**Exposure time**—Period of time during a sterilization or disinfection process in which items are exposed to the sterilant or disinfectant at the parameters specified by the manufacturer (e.g., time, concentration, temperature, pressure).

## F

---

**Facemask**—A loose-fitting, disposable device that creates a physical barrier between the mouth and nose of the wearer and potential contaminants in the immediate environment. Facemasks may be labeled as surgical, laser, isolation, dental or medical procedure masks and are cleared by the FDA for marketing. Facemasks do not seal tightly to the wearer's face, do not provide the wearer with a reliable level of protection from inhaling smaller airborne particles, and are not considered respiratory protection.

---

**Facepiece**—The part of a respirator that covers the nose and mouth of the wearer. Respirators may have half facepieces covering just the nose and mouth, or may have full facepieces covering the nose, mouth, and eyes. Facepieces are designed to form a seal with the face

---

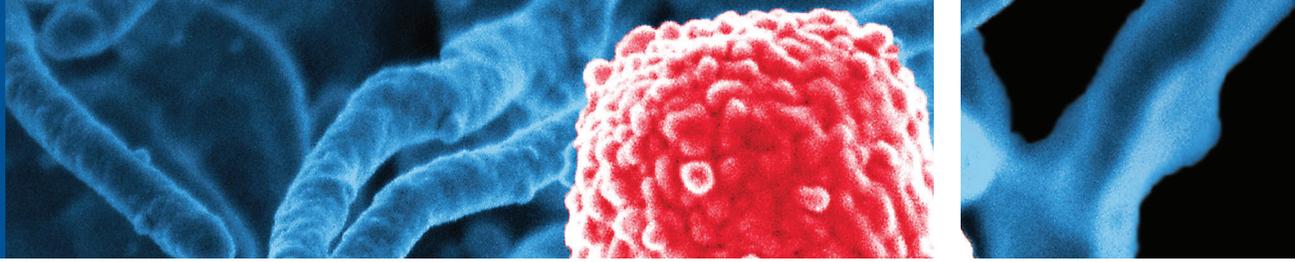
**Fatality rate**—Measurement of the number of people who, upon contacting a particular disease, will die from it

---

**Febrile**—Relating to a fever or feverish.

---

**Fever**—Refers to an elevation in body temperature. Technically, any body temperature above the normal oral measurement of 98.6°F (37°C) or the normal rectal temperature of 99°F (37.2°C) is considered to be elevated. Fever serves as one of the body's natural defenses against bacteria and viruses which cannot live at a higher temperature.



---

**Filtering facepiece respirator**—A type of disposable (single-use), negative-pressure, air-purifying respirator where an integral part of the facepiece or the entire facepiece is made of filtering material.

---

**Fit factor**—A quantitative estimate of the fit of a particular respirator to a specific individual. It typically estimates the ratio of the concentration of a substance in ambient air to its concentration inside the respirator when worn.

---

**Fit test**—The use of a protocol to qualitatively or quantitatively evaluate the fit of a respirator on an individual.

---

**Flora**—Micro-organisms resident in an environmental/body site.

---

**Fomite**—An object, such as clothing, towels, and utensils that possibly harbor an infectious agent and are capable of transmitting it.

---

**Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**—An agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The FDA is responsible for, among other things, protecting the public health by assuring drugs, vaccines, and other biological products and medical devices intended for human use are safe and effective.

---

**Fungi**—Single-celled or multicellular organisms that can be opportunistic pathogens that cause infections in immunocompromised persons or pathogens that cause infections in healthy persons. Examples include athlete's foot, yeast infections, and ringworm. Fungi are also used for the development of antibiotics, antitoxins, and other drugs used to control various human diseases.

## G

---

**Gastroenteritis**—Inflammation of the stomach and the intestines that causes symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.

---

**Gastrointestinal (GI) infection**—See gastroenteritis

---

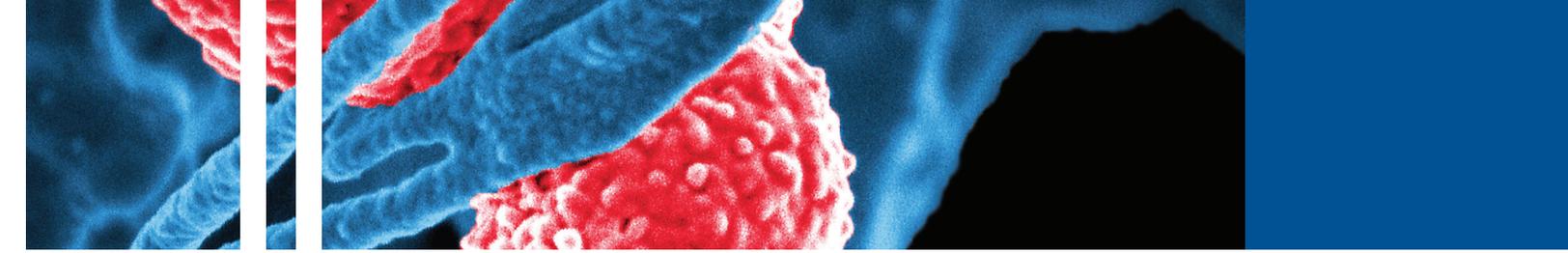
**Germicide**—An agent that destroys microorganisms, especially pathogenic organisms. Other terms with the suffix “-cide” (e.g., virucide, fungicide, bactericide, tuberculocide, sporicide) indicate an agent that destroys the microorganism identified by the prefix. Germicides may be used to inactivate microorganisms in or on living tissue (antiseptic) or on environmental surfaces (disinfectants).

---

**Germs**—The common definition of “germs” is small things people cannot see that make them sick. In scientific terminology, germs are a small mass of protoplasm or cells from which a new organism or one of its parts may develop. Two such microorganisms are bacteria and viruses.

---

**Glycocalyx**—A gelatinous polysaccharide and/or polypeptide outer covering. The glycocalyx can be identified by negative staining techniques. The glycocalyx is referred to as a capsule if it is firmly attached to the cell wall, or as a slime layer if loosely attached. This material produced by bacteria forms the structural matrix of biofilm.



---

**Gram-negative**—Bacteria, that when stained by the Gram method, appear red/pink.

---

**Gram-positive**—Bacteria that, when stained by the Gram method, appear purple.

---

**Gram stain**—Method used to differentiate bacteria based on characteristics of the bacterial cell wall.

## H

---

**HAI**—See healthcare-associated infection

---

**Half-mask elastomeric respirators**—A respirator with a tight-fitting facepiece that covers the nose and mouth that has either replaceable filters or cartridges for removing contaminants, or disposable filtering facepiece respirators where the entire facepiece is made of filtering material. Elastomeric respirators are sometimes referred to as reusable respirators because the facepiece is cleaned and reused but the filter cartridges are discarded and replaced when they become unsuitable for further use.

---

**Hand Care**—Actions to prevent skin irritation.

---

**Hand hygiene**—A general term that applies the following—1) hand washing with antimicrobial/non- antimicrobial soap and water or 2) antiseptic handrub (waterless antiseptic product, most often alcohol- based, rubbed on all surfaces of hands).

---

**Healthcare-associated infection (HAI)**—An infection that develops in a patient who is cared for in any setting where healthcare is delivered and is related to receiving health care. Formerly known as nosocomial infection.

---

**Healthcare epidemiologist**—A person with medical training and/or masters or doctorate-level epidemiological training who has received advanced training in healthcare epidemiology. Typically these professionals direct or provide consultation to an infection prevention program in a hospital, long term care facility (LTCF), or healthcare delivery system.

---

**Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC)**—A panel of experts who advise the CDC on matters of healthcare-associated infection surveillance, control, and prevention and release guidelines on a regular basis.

---

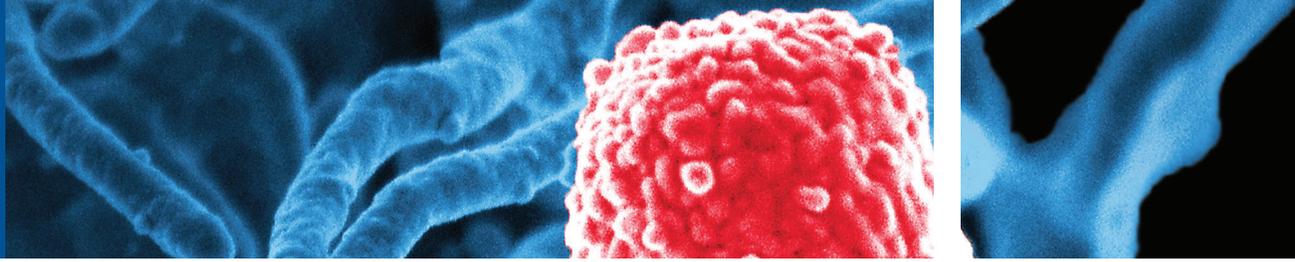
**Healthcare Waste (Hazardous Waste)**—Waste material that consists wholly or partly of human tissue, blood or body fluids, excretions, drugs or other pharmaceutical products, swabs/ dressings, syringes, needles or other sharp instruments.

---

**Hemorrhage**—The loss of blood from a ruptured blood vessel or end-organ.

---

**Hepatitis B Immune Globulin (HBIG)**—A product available for prophylaxis against hepatitis B virus infection. HBIG is prepared from plasma containing high titers of anti-HBs and provides short-term protection (3–6 months).



---

**Hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg)**—A serologic marker on the surface of HBV. It can be detected in high levels in serum during acute or chronic hepatitis. The body normally produces antibodies to surface antigen as part of the normal immune response to infection.

---

**Hepatitis B e antigen (HBeAg)**—A secreted product of the nucleocapsid gene of HBV and is found in serum during acute and chronic HBV infection. Its presence indicates that the virus is replicating and serves as a marker of increased infectivity.

---

**Hepatitis B Surface Antibody (anti-HBs)**—The protective antibody against the surface antigen of the hepatitis B virus (HBsAg). Presence in the blood can indicate past infection with, and immunity to, hepatitis B virus, or an immune response from hepatitis B vaccine.

---

**Heterotrophic bacteria**—Those bacteria that require an organic carbon source for growth (i.e., they derive energy and carbon from organic compounds). The modifier “mesophilic” describes bacteria that grow best within the middle ranges of environmental temperature.

---

**Hierarchy of controls**—A systematic approach to mitigating occupational hazards where control measures are evaluated and implemented in the following decreasing order of efficacy—(1) elimination, (2) substitution, (3) engineering controls, (4) administrative controls, and (5) personal protective equipment.

---

**High-efficiency (HE) or high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter**—The NIOSH classification for a filter that is at least 99.97% efficient in removing particles and is used in powered air-purifying respirators (PAPRs). When high-efficiency filters are required for non-powered respirators, N100, R100, or P100 filters may be used.

---

**High-level disinfection**—A disinfection process that inactivates bacteria, mycobacteria, fungi, and viruses but not necessarily high numbers of bacterial spores. The FDA further defines a high-level disinfectant as a sterilant used under the same contact conditions except for a shorter contact time.

---

**High Risk Patients**—High Risk Patients with an increased probability of infection due to their underlying medical condition. Often refers to patients in intensive care units, those receiving total parenteral nutrition, and immunocompromised patients.

---

**Hood**—The portion of a respirator that completely covers the head and neck, and may also cover portions of the shoulders and torso, and through which clean air is distributed to the breathing zone.

---

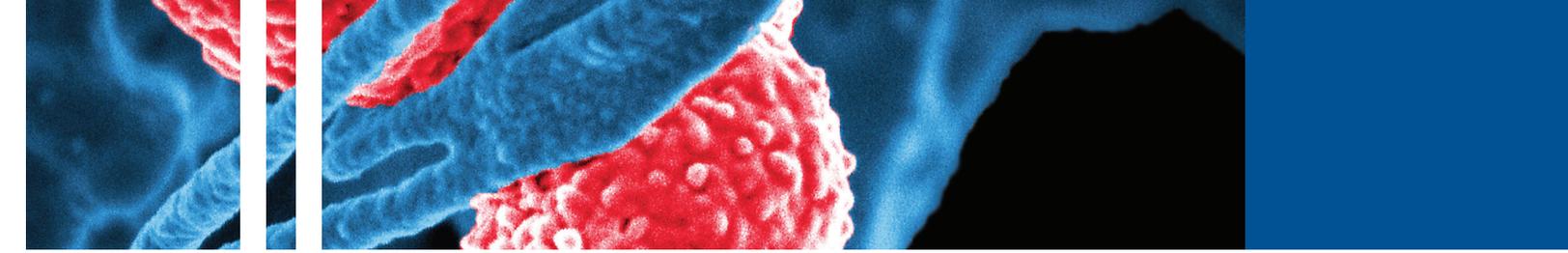
**Hospital-Acquired Infection**—Infection acquired during hospitalization; not present or incubating at the time of admission to hospital. Also see Nosocomial Infection.

---

**Hospital disinfectant**—A germicide that is registered by EPA for use on inanimate objects in hospitals, clinics, dental offices, or any other medical-related facility. Efficacy is demonstrated against *Salmonella choleraesuis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*.

---

**Host**—Organisms in which smaller organisms or viruses live, feed and reproduce.



---

**Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT)**—Hyperbaric treatment can literally save the lives and limbs of patients with wounds that are difficult to heal because of chronic medical conditions such as diabetes and poor circulation. It is also used to treat other difficult to heal wounds such as necrotizing infections (flesh-eating bacteria), radiation tissue damage, burns, carbon monoxide poisoning, smoke inhalation and scuba diving injuries. HBOT involves breathing 100% oxygen in a sealed chamber. This concentration is five times higher than normal air we breathe. The chamber is also pressurized to create 1.5 to 3 times normal atmospheric pressure. These changes can improve blood circulation and the blood's ability to deliver oxygen to the body.

---

**Hygiene**—The science of preventive medicine and the preservation of health. From the name of Hygeia, the daughter of Asklepios, the Greek god of medicine (whose staff with entwined snake is the symbol of medicine.) Asklepios had a number of children including not only Hygeia but also Panacea, the patroness of clinical medicine. Hygeia also followed her father into medicine. As the patroness of health, Hygeia was charged with providing a healthy environment to prevent illness. In Greek, “hygieia” means health.

---

**Hypersensitivity**—An immune reaction (allergy) in which the body has an exaggerated response to a specific antigen (e.g., food, pet dander, wasp venom). See allergic contact dermatitis, anaphylaxis, latex allergy.

---

**Hypochlorite**—A chlorine (bleach) based disinfectant.

---

**HICPAC**—See Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee

---

**ICP**—See infection preventionist

---

**ICU**—See intensive care unit

---

**Iatrogenic**—Induced inadvertently by a healthcare worker or by medical treatment or diagnostic procedures. Used especially in reference to an infectious disease or other complication of medical treatment.

---

**Immunity**—Protection against a disease. Immunity is indicated by the presence of antibodies in the blood and can usually be determined with a laboratory test.

---

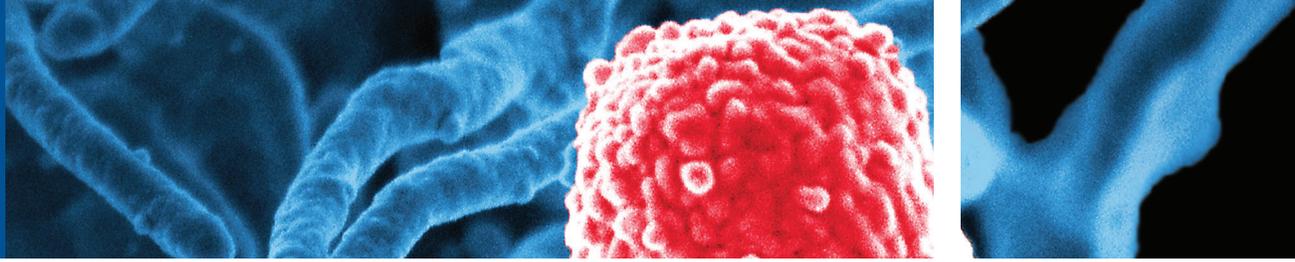
**Immunization**—The procedure by which a subject is rendered immune, or resistant to a specific disease. This term is often used interchangeably with vaccination or inoculation, although the act of inoculation/vaccination does not always result in immunity.

---

**Immunocompromised**—Those whose immune mechanisms are deficient because of congenital or acquired immunologic disorders (e.g., human immunodeficiency virus [HIV] infection), chronic diseases (e.g., diabetes mellitus, cancer, emphysema), malnutrition, or immunosuppressive therapy of another disease process.

---

**Immunogenicity**—The property that endows a substance with the capacity to provoke an immune response or the degree to which a substance possess this property.



---

**Incidence**—The number of new cases of infection or disease or colonization identified in a specific population in a given time period.

---

**Incidence rate**—The number of new cases of disease during a specific time period divided by the population at risk.

---

**Incubation Period**—The time elapsed between exposure to a pathogenic organism and when symptoms and signs first appear.

---

**Index Case**—The first case to be recognized in a series of transmissions of an agent in a host population.

---

**Indirect contact transmission**—Spread of a disease to a susceptible host through contact with a contaminated intermediate object, usually inanimate. Infectious microorganisms—microorganisms capable of producing infection in susceptible hosts.

---

**Infection**—The invasion of the body by pathogenic microorganisms and their multiplication which can lead to tissue damage and disease.

---

**Infection control and prevention program**—A multidisciplinary program that includes a group of activities to ensure that recommended practices for the prevention of healthcare-associated infections are implemented and followed by healthcare workers, making the healthcare setting safe from infection for patients and healthcare personnel. This program usually includes surveillance of healthcare-associated infections (HAIs), investigation of any HAI trends or problems, implementation of prevention practices, evaluation and management of outbreaks, and reporting HAI data to designated authorities.

---

**Infectious Disease Specialist (IDS)**—Also called Infection Control Professionals (ICP) or the more recent term of Infection Preventionist. Infection prevention and control professionals are healthcare facility staff members who implement measures to prevent the spread of infection to patients, employees and visitors across all healthcare settings. While many come from nursing backgrounds, ICPs increasingly are coming from other disciplines including microbiology and medical technology. The ICP functions as a member of the staff in the role of educator and consultant. Their responsibilities include—

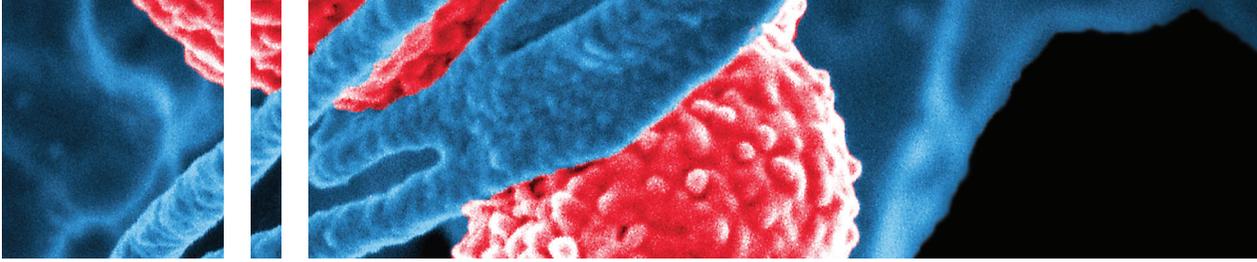
- Data collection and analysis
  - Outbreak investigation
  - Development and implementation of prevention and control strategies
  - Implementation of regulatory requirements
  - ICPs collaborate across departments within the facility, touching virtually every area including nursing, medical staff, administration, laboratory, pharmacy, housekeeping, and facilities engineering and construction.
- 

**Infectious dose**—Is the number of organisms it takes to cause infection in a host.

---

**Infection preventionist (IP)**—A healthcare worker who specializes in infection surveillance, control, and prevention. Also known as an Infection Control and Prevention Professional or an Infection Control Practitioner (ICP).

---



---

**Infection rate**—Number of infections reported in a specified period of time divided by the population at risk for the infection during the same specified period of time.

---

**Infectivity**—The ability of a disease to spread.

---

**Inflammation**—The reaction of living tissue to a pathogenic microorganism or object, characterized by heat, swelling, redness and pain.

---

**Inhalation**—The process by which air is drawn into the lungs.

---

**Inoculation**—The controlled introduction into the body, usually through the skin, of material containing specific pathogenic microorganisms or their products in order to stimulate an immunity to a particular disease.

---

**Intermediate-level disinfection**—A disinfection process that inactivates vegetative bacteria, most fungi, mycobacteria, and most viruses (particularly the enveloped viruses) but not bacterial spores.

---

**Intermediate-level disinfectant**—A liquid chemical germicide registered by the EPA as hospital disinfectant and with a label claim of potency as a tuberculocidal.

---

**Intestinal**—Referring to sections of the alimentary canal, intestines.

---

**Intoxication**—Illness due to a toxin made by a pathogen or external ingestion.

---

**Intramuscular (IM) injection**—A shot where the needle goes into the muscle layer under the skin to deliver medicine. IM injections are deeper than subcutaneous injections (given under the skin).

---

**Irritant contact dermatitis**—The development of dry, itchy, irritated areas on the skin, which can result from frequent handwashing and gloving as well as exposure to chemicals. This condition is not an allergic reaction.

---

**Invasive Medical Device**—Any medical device that enters the body either through a body opening or through a skin or mucous membrane breaking.

---

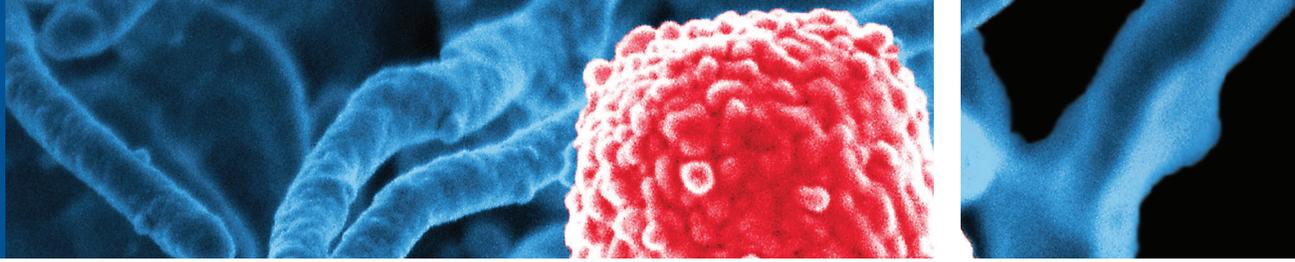
**Invasive procedure**—A medical procedure that involves entering the body, usually by cutting or puncturing the skin or by inserting instruments into the body.

---

**IP**—See infection preventionist

---

**Isolation**—The physical separation of an infected or colonized host from the remainder of the at risk population in an attempt to prevent transmission of the specific agent to other individuals and patients.



---

**Isolation Precautions**—The Centers for Disease Control's *Guidelines for Isolation Precautions in Hospitals* identifies several categories of isolation that are appropriate according to the mode of transmission of the infectious agent.

- **Strict isolation Precautions** are used for highly contagious or virulent infections in which the agent may be spread by direct contact or droplet. Procedures include segregation in a private room; use of gowns, masks, and gloves; and sometimes special ventilation.
- **Contact Isolation Precautions** are intended to prevent transmission of infectious agents, which are spread by direct or indirect contact with the patient or the patient's environment. This includes patients infected or colonized with Multi-Drug Resistant Organisms (MDROs).

Contact Precautions also apply where the presence of excessive wound drainage, fecal incontinence, or other discharges from the body suggest an increased potential for extensive environmental contamination and risk of transmission.

A single patient room is preferred for patients who require Contact Precautions. When a single-patient room is not available, consultation with infection control personnel is recommended to assess the various risks associated with other patient placement options (e.g. keeping the patient with an existing roommate).

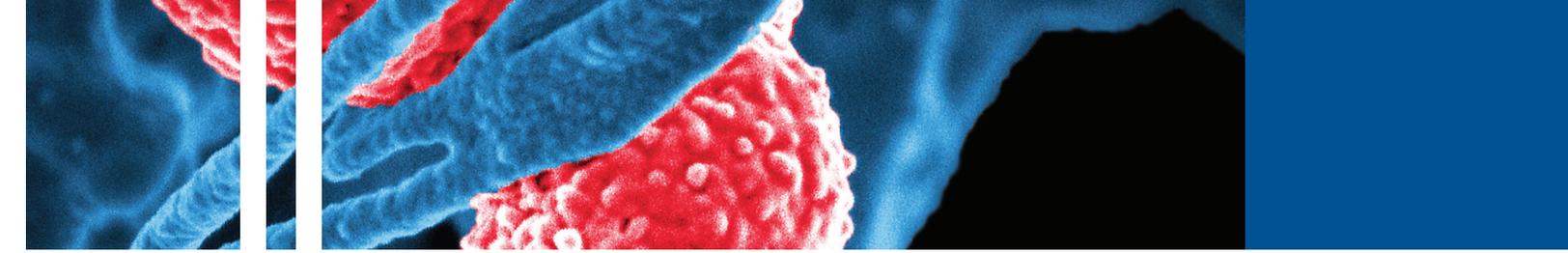
In multi-patient rooms, at least a 3 feet spatial separation between beds is advised to reduce the opportunities for inadvertent sharing of items between the infected/colonized patient and other patients.

Healthcare personnel caring for patients on Contact Isolation Precautions should wear a gown and gloves for all interactions that may involve contact with the patient or potentially contaminated areas in the patient's environment. Donning Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) before room entry and discarding before exiting the patient room is done to contain pathogens, especially those that have been implicated in transmission through environmental contamination (e.g., VRE, *C. difficile*, noroviruses and other intestinal tract pathogens; RSV)

## J

---

**Jaundiced**—A yellowing of the skin due to an excess of bile (a product of the liver) pigments in the blood.

  
**K****L**

---

**Laboratory-Confirmed Primary Bloodstream Infection (LCBI)**—A primary bloodstream infection identified by laboratory tests with or without clinical signs or symptoms; most often associated with the use of catheters or other invasive medical devices.

---

**Latent Infection**—A microorganism in a resting state, not actively causing disease, however has the capacity to cause disease in the presence of activation factors.

---

**Latex allergy**—A type I or immediate anaphylactic hypersensitivity reaction to the proteins found in natural rubber latex.

---

**Lesion**—A structural change in any part of the body resulting from injury or as a consequence of disease.

---

**Loose-fitting face piece**—The portion of a respirator that forms a partial seal with the face but leaves the back of the neck exposed, is designed to form a partial seal with the face, and through which clean air is distributed to the breathing zone.

---

**Low-level disinfectant**—A liquid chemical germicide registered by the EPA as a hospital disinfectant. OSHA requires use of appropriate disinfectants. EPA requires that low-level disinfectants have a label claim for potency against HIV and HBV if used for disinfecting clinical contact surfaces.

---

**Low-level disinfection**—A process that will inactivate most vegetative bacteria, some fungi, and some viruses but cannot be relied on to inactivate resistant microorganisms (e.g., mycobacteria or bacterial spores).

---

**LTCF**—See long-term care facility

---

**Lymphedema**—Also called Lymphatic obstruction. Edema, or swelling, may happen when there is an increase in the amount of fluid or because of a blockage in the lymphatic system

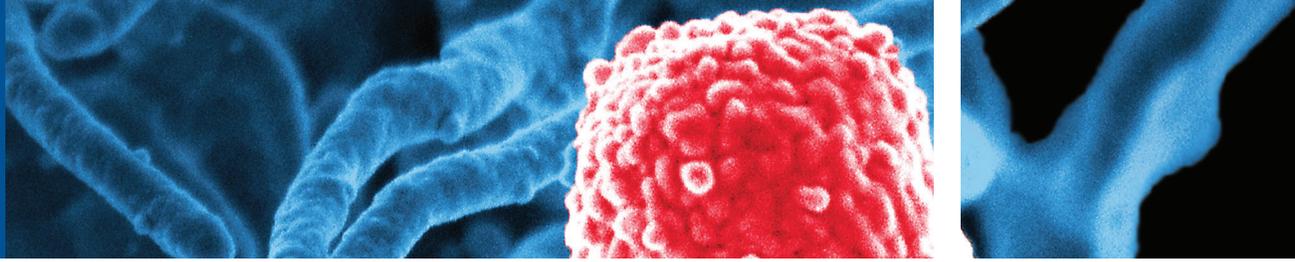
---

**Lymphatic System**—The lymphatic system is a network of tissues and organs. It is made up mainly of lymph vessels, It collects excess fluid and proteins from body tissues and carries them back to the blood-stream. Lymph vessels, which are different from blood vessels, carry fluid called lymph nodes throughout your body.

---

**Lymph node**—One of numerous centers in the body where disease microorganisms may be filtered out from the blood.

---



## M

**Mask**—A term that applies collectively to items used to cover the nose and mouth and includes both procedure masks and surgical masks.

**MDRO**—See multidrug-resistant organism

**Mechanical indicator**—Devices (e.g., gauges, meter, display, printout) that display an element of the sterilization process (e.g., time, temperature, pressure).

**Medical waste (Regulated)**—Waste sufficiently capable of causing infection during handling and disposal (e.g., blood- or saliva-soaked cotton rolls, extracted teeth, sharp items, surgically-removed hard- and soft-tissues) to merit special handling and disposal.

**Microbes**—See microorganisms

**Microbiological Clearance**—The reduction of the number of pathogenic microorganisms in a specimen below that detectable by conventional means.

**Microorganisms**—An organism that can be seen only with the aid of a microscope and that typically consists of only a single cell. Microorganisms include bacteria, fungi, parasites, and viruses.

**Mucous membranes**—A membrane, or lining, which protects the various passages of the body that are exposed to the external environment by secreting a slimy substance called mucus.

**Multidrug-resistant organism (MDRO)**—Type of bacteria that has become resistant to many of the drugs that used to be effective against it.

## N

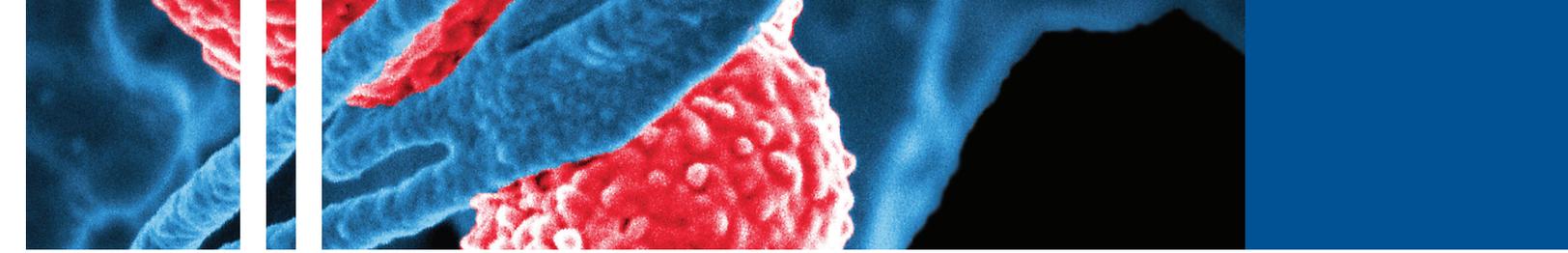
**N95 filter**—A type of NIOSH-approved filter or filter material, which captures at least 95% of airborne particles and is not resistant to oil.

**N95 filtering facepiece respirator**—An air-purifying respirator with NIOSH-approved N95 particulate filters or filter material (i.e., includes N95 filtering facepiece respirator or equivalent protection).

**N-95 disposable respirator**—A tight fitting disposable respirator that is capable of filtering 95% of sub micron particles.

**National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN)**—A secure computer system for hospitals throughout America to share information about their healthcare-associated infections. Managed by the Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion (DHQP) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

**National Institutes of Health (NIH)**—NIH is the world's premier medical research organization, supporting over 38,000 research projects nationwide in diseases including cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes, arthritis, heart ailments and AIDS. Includes 27 separate health institutes and centers.



---

**National Library of Medicine (NLM)**—The National Library of Medicine (NLM), on the campus of NIH in Bethesda, Maryland, is the world’s largest medical library.

---

**Necrosis/Necrotizing**—The death of most or all of the cells in an organ or tissue due to disease, injury, or failure of the blood supply. Necrotizing refers to causing necrosis. Both processes cause the dead cells/tissues to exude a brown, putrid discharge containing tissue debris.

---

**Needle-Free Devices (Also Needleless Intravascular Catheter Connectors)**—Intravascular connector systems developed to help reduce the intravascular catheter connectors) incidence of needlestick injury while facilitating medication delivery through intravascular catheters. There are three types of needle-free connectors—blunt cannula (two-piece) Systems, one-piece needle-free systems, and one-piece needle-free systems with positive pressure.

---

**Needle Safety Device (Also Needle Protection/Prevention Device)**—Any device designed to reduce the risk of injury associated with a contaminated needle. This may include needle-free devices or mechanisms on a needle, such as an automated re-sheathing device, that cover the needle immediately after use.

---

**Negative-pressure respirator (tight-fitting)**—A tight-fitting respirator in which air is inhaled through an air-purifying filter, cartridge, or canister during inhalational efforts, generating negative pressure inside the face piece relative to ambient air pressure outside the respirator.

---

**NHSN**—See National Healthcare Safety Network

---

**NIOSH**—The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health is the Federal agency responsible for conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work-related disease and injury. The Institute is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

---

**Nitrile**—A synthetic rubber made from organic compounds and cyanide.

---

**Noncritical**—The category of medical items or surfaces that carry the least risk of disease transmission. This category has been expanded to include not only noncritical medical devices but also environmental surfaces. Noncritical medical devices touch only unbroken (non-intact) skin (e.g., blood pressure cuff). Noncritical environmental surfaces can be further divided into clinical contact surfaces (e.g., light handle) and housekeeping surfaces (e.g., floors, countertops).

---

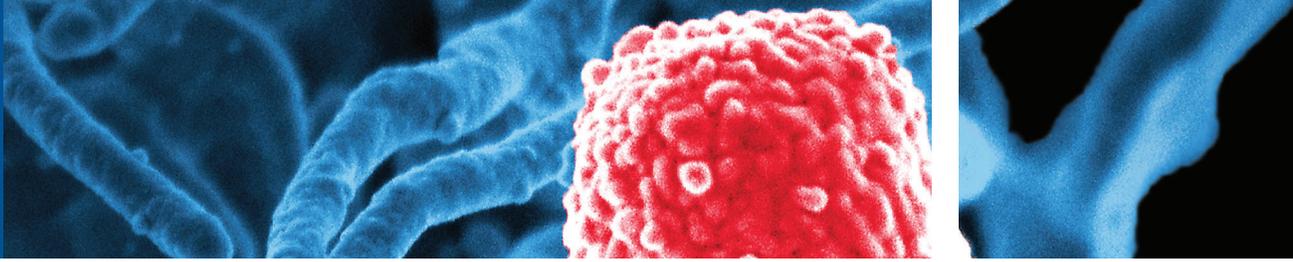
**Normal Flora**—Bacteria that live on or in a person normally, not actively causing disease.

---

**Nosocomial infection**—An infection that is acquired during hospitalization but that was neither present nor incubating at the time of hospital admission, unless it is related to a prior hospitalization, and that may become clinically manifest after discharge from the hospital.

---

**Numerator**—Number of individuals who experience an event or outcome of interest. The numerator, along with the denominator, is used to calculate a rate. The numerator is the top half of a fraction.



## O

**Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)**—The federal agency within the US Department of Labor responsible for promulgating and enforcing national safety and health standards, including the bloodborne pathogens standard.

**Occupational exposure**—A reasonably anticipated skin, eye, mucous membrane, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that may result from the performance of an employee's duties.

**OSHA**—See Occupational Safety and Health Administration

**OPIM ( Other Potentially Infectious Materials)**—An OSHA term that refers to (1) The following human body fluids—semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid, peritoneal fluid, amniotic fluid, saliva in dental procedures, any body fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood, and all body fluids in situations where it is difficult or impossible to differentiate between body fluids; (2) Any unfixed tissue or organ (other than intact skin) from a human (living or dead); and (3) HIV-containing cell or tissue cultures, organ cultures, and HIV- or HBV-containing culture medium or other solutions; and blood, organs, or other tissues from experimental animals infected with HIV or HBV.

**Opportunistic infection**—An infection caused by a microorganism that does not ordinarily cause disease but is capable of doing so, under certain host conditions (e.g., impaired immune response).

**Outbreak**—An increase in the incidence of disease in a facility above the baseline level or a cluster of new cases that are epidemiologically linked.

**Outcomes**—All the possible results that may stem from exposure to a causal factor or from preventive or therapeutic interventions (ie. mortality, cost, and development of a hospital-acquired infection).

## P

**Pandemic**—An epidemic that is geographically widespread; occurring throughout a region or the world.

**Parasite**—An organism that lives in or on and takes its nourishment from another organism and cannot live independently. Examples include scabies and *Giardia*.

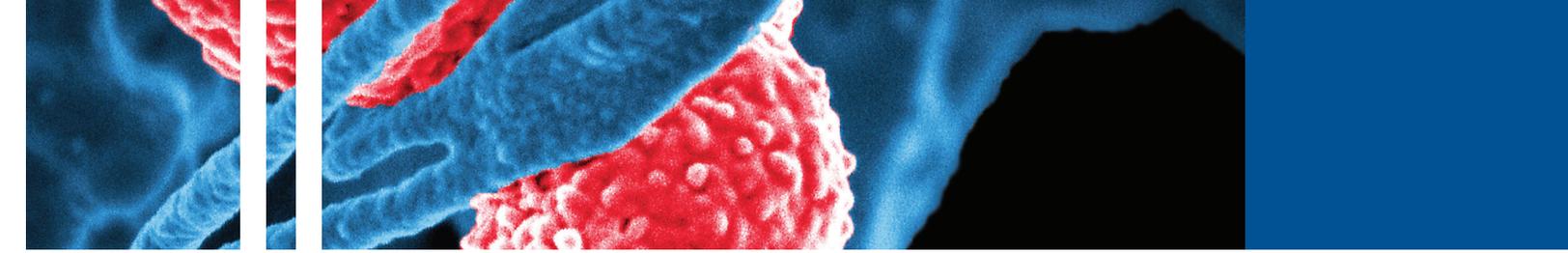
**Pathogen**—A microorganism that can cause disease.

**Pathogenic**—The ability of microorganisms to cause disease.

**Pathogenicity**—The ability of an organism to cause disease and harm the host.

**Peripheral nerves**—The nerves of the skull and the spine.

**Prions**—Infectious proteins. The smallest known infectious agents.



---

**Prophylaxis**—A measure taken to prevent disease.

---

**Pulmonary**—Relating to the lungs.

---

**Pus**—A viscous fluid containing dead matter such as white blood cells, bacteria and tissue.

## Q

## R

---

**Reactivation**—Referring to when a latent pathogen is in a state of actively producing disease.

---

**Recrudescence**—The reappearance of a disease, especially after a period of dormancy.

---

**Reservoir of infection**—Any person, animal, plant, soil, or substance in which an infectious agent normally lives and multiplies. The reservoir typically harbors the infectious agent without injury to itself and serves as a source from which other individuals can be infected.

---

**Respiratory**—Relating to breathing.

## S

---

**Secondary infection**—An attack by a pathogenic microorganism as a result of a weakness or damage caused by an already established microorganism.

---

**Septicemia**—A condition that rapidly spreads to all parts of the body, commonly known as blood poisoning or toxic state, occurs due to the multiplication of microorganisms in the blood, or to a sustained entry of large number of pathogens from a focus of infection.

---

**Shock**—A collapse of the body's system caused by a fall in the volume of circulating blood. The term can also refer to a temporary state of psychological overburdening.

---

**Standardized infection ratio (SIR)**—A summary measure used to compare the healthcare-associated infection experience among one or more groups of patients to that of a standard population. It is calculated as the observed number of infections divided by the expected number of infections.

---

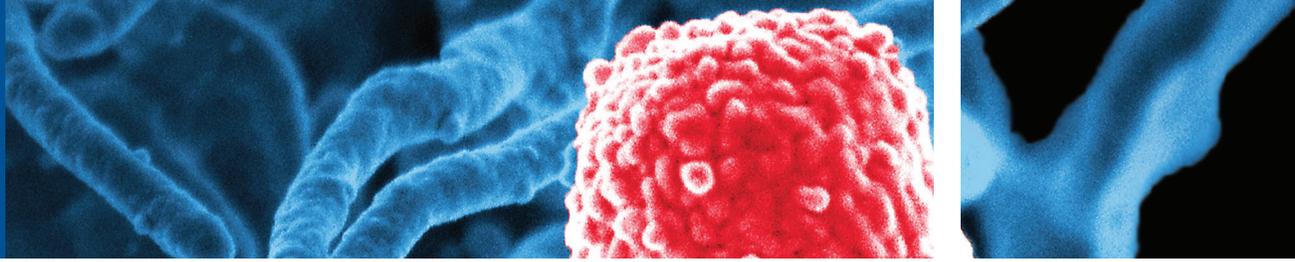
**Sterile/sterility**—State of being free from all living microorganisms.

---

**Sterile water**—Water that is sterilized and contains no antimicrobial agents.

---

**Sterilization**—The use of a physical or chemical procedure to destroy all microorganisms.



---

**Sterilising Agent (Sterilant)**—An agent or combination of agents which under defined conditions leads to sterilisation.

---

**Subcutaneous**—Beneath the skin.

---

**Subdermal**—Beneath the dermis, a lower layer of the skin.

---

**Suffocation**—A lack of oxygen caused by a mechanical obstruction to the passage of air from the atmosphere to the lungs.

---

**Superbug**—An informal term for a bacterium that has become resistant to antibiotics usually used to treat it, as methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) or any multiresistant bacterium.

---

**Superficial disease**—Generally a nonlethal disease. Infection is usually confined to a small area of the patient's body and does not spread via the bloodstream.

---

**Surfactants**—Surface-active agents that reduce surface tension and help cleaning by loosening, emulsifying, and holding soil in suspension, which can then be more readily rinsed away.

---

**Surgical hand scrub**—An antiseptic-containing preparation that substantially reduces the number of microorganisms on intact skin; it is broad-spectrum, fast-acting, and persistent.

---

**Surgical mask**—A loose-fitting, disposable type of facemask that creates a physical barrier between the mouth and nose of the wearer to protect patients from secretions. Surgical masks are fluid resistant and provide protection from splashes, sprays, and splatter. Surgical masks do not seal tightly to the wearer's face, do not provide the wearer with a reliable level of protection from inhaling smaller airborne particles, and are not considered respiratory protection.

---

**Surgical respirator**—A filtering facepiece respirator with spray- or splash-resistant facemask material on the outside to protect the wearer from splashes. Also known as a surgical N95 respirator

---

**Surgical site infection (SSI)**—An infection of a surgical wound, tissue, or organ space near the wound.

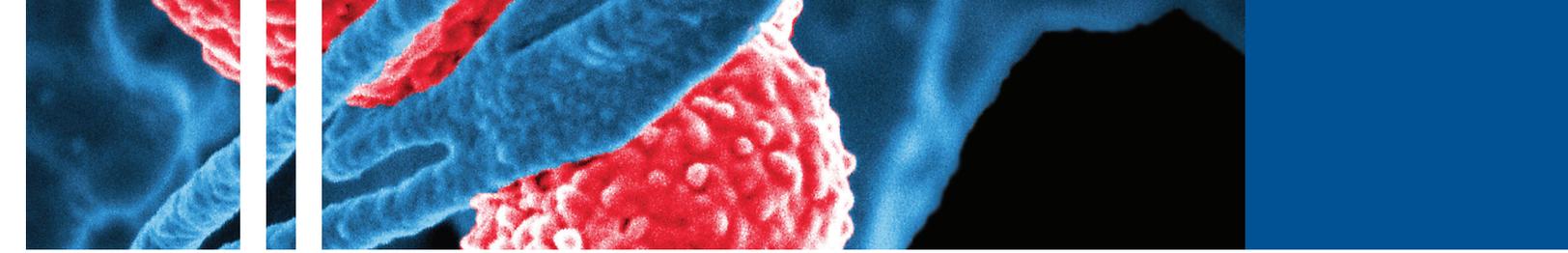
---

**Surveillance**—The ongoing, systematic collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of data regarding a health-related event for use in public health action to reduce morbidity and mortality and to improve health.

---

**Susceptible**—A person presumably not possessing sufficient resistance (or immunity) against a pathogenic agent who contracts infection when exposed to the agent.

---



## T

**Taxonomy**—A form of scientific classification.

**Terminal cleaning**—The thorough cleaning of a person's room following discharge or transfer in order to prevent transmission of potentially infectious organisms to the next room occupant.

**Therapeutic Drug**—Any drug taken to help cure a disease or symptoms.

**Toxicity**—The degree to which a substance, including toxin or poison, can harm humans or animals.

**Toxin**—A poisonous substance produced by a pathogenic microorganism.

**Total Parenteral Nutrition (TPN)**—Intravenous feeding that provides a patient with all of the fluid and the essential nutrients when they are unable to feed themselves by mouth.

**Transient flora**—Microorganisms that may be present in or on the body under certain conditions and for certain lengths of time; they are easier to remove by mechanical friction than resident flora.

**Transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs)**—A group of rapidly progressive, invariably fatal, degenerative neurological disorders affecting both humans and animals that are caused by infection with prions (see Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease and prion).

**Transmission**—The method by which any potentially infecting agent is spread to another host.

**Transmission-based precautions**—A set of practices that apply to patients with documented or suspected infection or colonization with highly transmissible or epidemiologically important pathogens for which precautions beyond the standard precautions are needed to interrupt disease transmission.

**Turbidity**—Cloudiness.

## U

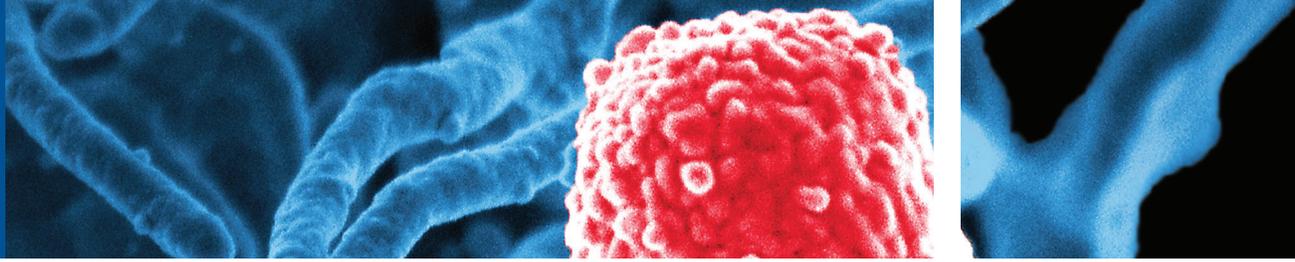
**Ulceration**—A disintegration of the skin or mucous membranes to cause a sore which is usually slow to heal.

**Ultrasonic cleaner**—A device that uses waves of acoustic energy (a process known as “cavitation”) to loosen and break up debris on instruments.

**Universal precautions**—See standard precautions

**Urinary catheter**—A small, flexible tube that is inserted into the urethra to the bladder to allow for the drainage of urine. Also known as a Foley catheter.

**Urinary tract infection (UTI)**—An infection that can happen anywhere along the urinary tract. A UTI that occurs in a patient with a catheter is known as a catheter-associated UTI (CAUTI).



---

**User seal check**—An action conducted by the respirator user to determine if the respirator is properly seated to the face. For all tight-fitting respirators, the employer shall ensure that employees perform a user seal check each time they put on the respirator using the procedures in Appendix B-1 of OSHA's respiratory protection standard or equally effective procedures recommended by the respirator manufacturer. User seal checks are not substitutes for qualitative or quantitative fit tests.

---

**UTI**—See urinary tract infection

---

## V

---

**Vaccination**—See immunization

---

**Vaccine**—A product that produces immunity therefore protecting the body from the disease. Vaccines can be administered by injection, mouth, or aerosol.

---

**VAP**—See ventilator-associated pneumonia

---

**Vector**—An animal that transmits infectious agents from one host to another. Infectious agents can be conveyed mechanically by simple contact or biologically where the parasite develops in the vector.

---

**Vectorborne pathogen**—Pathogens carried from one host to another via a vector, such as an insect.

---

**Venereal**—In the medical sense, relating to a disease transmitted by sexual intercourse.

---

**Ventilation**—The process of supplying and removing air by natural or mechanical means to and from any space; such air may be conditioned.

---

**Ventilator**—A device that pumps air into the lungs of patients who cannot breathe well on their own.

---

**Ventilator-associated pneumonia (VAP)**—Severe lung infection that develops after a patient is placed on a ventilator.

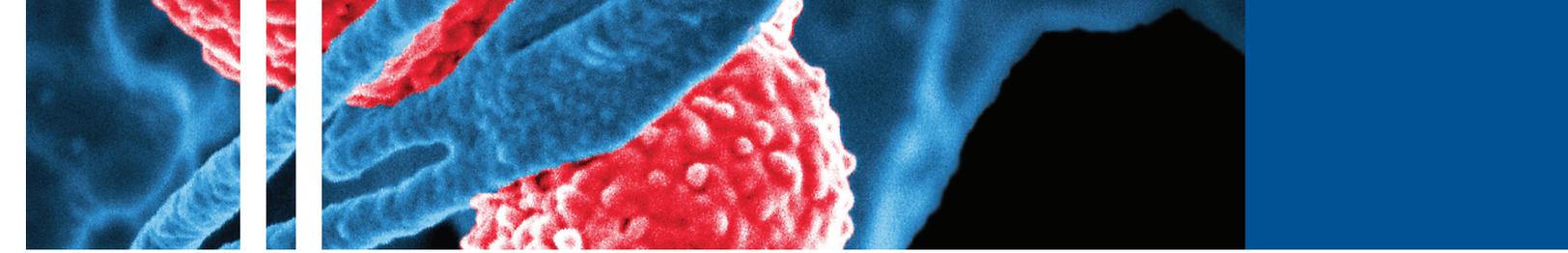
---

**Virulence**—The degree of damage caused by a pathogen and its ability to cause disease. is a measure of the severity of the disease it is capable of causing.

---

**Virus**—A microorganism smaller than bacteria that cannot grow or reproduce apart from a living cell. Examples include influenza, chicken pox, hepatitis, and HIV.

---



## W, X, Y, Z

---

**Washer-disinfector**—An automatic unit designed to clean and thermally disinfect instruments. The unit uses a high-temperature cycle rather than a chemical bath.

---

**Wicking**—Absorption of a liquid by capillary action along a thread or through the material (e.g., the enhanced penetration of liquids through undetected holes in a glove).

---

**Work practice controls**—Practices incorporated into the everyday work routine that reduce the likelihood of exposure by altering the manner in which a task is performed (e.g., prohibiting recapping of needles by a two-handed technique).

---

**Zoonosis or Zoonotic Infection**—A disease of animals that can be transmitted to humans.; may be enzootic or epizootic.

**For Definitions and Details of specific Pathogens please visit—**

<https://medlineplus.gov/mplusdictionary.html?PHPSESSID=6e02fbbb4c3eef8a1f6d6516175291ab>

