WHO NEEDS TO WEAR GLOVES

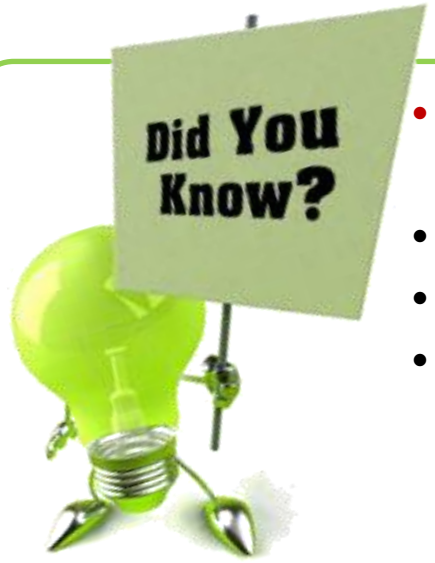
This guide provides information for the appropriate choice and use of GLOVES to reduce the risk of exposure to infectious agents. The risk assessment of the job must clearly demonstrate that exposure is unavoidable and all other methods of control are not reasonably practical.

GLOVES MUST BE WORN BY:

- Health workers (HWs) providing clinical work involving direct care for patients.
- Laboratory staff handling samples.
- Caregivers involved with providing direct care or when handling stool, urine or waste from a COVID-19 patient.
- Cleaners in healthcare facilities, laboratories & care facilities.

INAPPROPRIATE & UNNECESSARY USE OF GLOVES

- The use of gloves when not indicated is a waste of resources and does not reduce transmission.
- HWs doing preliminary screening (e.g. completing questionnaires) where there is no direct contact with the patient and social distancing can be maintained.
- Non-healthcare workers where contact precautions are not necessary.



THERE ARE SEVERAL IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

- **ALL WORKERS MUST BE TRAINED ON THE CORRECT SELECTION, USE AND DISPOSAL OF GLOVES**
- Contaminated gloves can become a means for spreading germs from repeated touching of surfaces.
- Hand hygiene must be done before donning (putting on) gloves and after doffing (taking off).
- Although medical gloves are single-use items and should be changed between patients and between different treatment activities for the same patient, in a glove shortage crisis gloved hands should be cleaned between patients and at other times when hand hygiene would normally be performed during routine patient care. Hand sanitizers or water and soap can be used.
- Double gloving is not recommended for routine care.
- Prolonged use of gloves for contact precautions without performing hand hygiene can result in the transmission of germs.
- Gloves must be appropriate for the purpose and must give the best possible level of protection.
- Gloves should fit properly and should not increase the overall risk (e.g. not get caught in equipment).
- It is important to check the performance of the gloves on the job.
- Good hand-care should be practiced to limit damage to the skin however oil-based hand lotions or creams may adversely affect the integrity of latex gloves.
- **If gloves are contaminated they should be disposed of in infectious waste according to the hazardous waste management.**

SELECTION OF GLOVES

Glove material	Advantages	Disadvantages
Natural latex rubber	– Highest comfort, flexibility, fit and tactile sensitivity – Protective against viruses & bacteria	– Allergic reaction to latex may occur in some individuals therefore low latex, powder-free gloves are recommended
Nitrile	– Most puncture resistant material for disposable medical gloves – Good protection against microorganisms and chemicals – Chlorinated finish applied to the glove makes donning & doffing easier – Are suitable to wear for extended amount of time due to dexterity and increased comfort (info to be obtained from supplier)	– Slightly lower dexterity than natural rubber latex gloves – Easily torn
PVC (Vinyl)	– Optimal for tasks that have a minimal exposure to microorganisms, and require frequent glove changes – Lowest allergy rate	– Less durable – Less resistant to punctures
Heavy duty gloves (latex/vinyl)	– Resistant to cleaning chemicals – Can be disinfected according to SDS from suppliers	– If not disinfected properly can spread infection

QUALITY: It is recommended that gloves used should comply with the South African National Standards (SANS:11193), National Regulator for Compulsory Standards (NRCS) or other relevant international standards such as: ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) or European Union (EN) standards certification. These organizations test gloves to ascertain if they meet the expected performance requirements like the protective effects and durability under various conditions.

NATIONAL HEALTH LABORATORY SERVICE

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH
Division of the National Health Laboratory Service

WORKPLACE HOTLINE: 0800 2121 75

www.nioh.ac.za | www.nicd.ac.za | info@nioh.ac.za