

NEVER EVENTS

Patient Death or Serious Harm Arising From the Use of Improperly Sterilized Instruments or Equipment Provided by the Health Care Facility

Definition

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Reporting

This event includes instances where a sterile instrument becomes contaminated prior to use (e.g., a patient receives an injection from a contaminated vial), and where equipment (e.g., a scope) is improperly cleaned.

Manufacturer contamination is not included in this event as this is an industrial safety concern, not an error at the point of care.

Source: [Never Events for Hospital Care in Canada](#)

Resources for Health Care Teams

Clinical Guidelines and Standards

National and Provincial

- Association of periOperative Registered Nurses:
[Key Takeaways: 3 New Instrument Cleaning Guideline Updates to Improve Sterilization and Safety](#)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [Surgical Site Infection \(SSI\) Prevention Guideline](#)
- University of Toronto: [Surgical Site Infection Prevention](#) (clinical practice guideline)

International

- American College of Surgeons and Surgical Infection Society:
[Surgical Site Infection Guidelines, 2016 Update](#)
- World Health Organization: [Global Guidelines for the Prevention of Surgical Site Infection](#)

Checklists, Tools, and Resources for Prevention and Management

National

- DynaMed:
 - [Surgical Site Infection – Prevention](#)
 - [Suspected Surgical Site Infection – Approach to the Patient](#)
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence: [Surgical Site Infections: Prevention and Treatment](#)

Other Partner Links and References

National

- CSA Group:
[Addressing the Safe, Effective, and Reliable Reprocessing of Reusable Medical Devices in Canada](#) (article)

International

- *Alternative Therapies*: Management Quality of Surgical Instrument and Influence of Cleaning and Sterilization on the Surgical Outcomes of the Patient: [A Review](#) (article)
- American National Standards Institute (ANSI): [ANSI/AAMI ST58:2024 – Health Care Facility Sterilization](#) (blog article)
- Steris Healthcare: [How Are Surgical Instruments Cleaned and Disinfected?](#) (article)

Additional tools and resources are available in our [Quality and Patient Safety Community of Practice](#) and [Ontario Surgical Network Community of Practice](#) on Quorum.

To learn more about Ontario Health’s Never Events Reporting program for hospitals, please visit [Never Events](#).

Need this information in an accessible format? 1-877-280-8538, TTY 1-800-855-0511, info@OntarioHealth.ca

Document disponible en français en contactant info@OntarioHealth.ca

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