GE Healthcare FAQ for Cleaning and Disinfection

It is important to follow specific facility/site local infection control protocols, the information below does not supersede or replace health care facility infection control protocols.

1. **Does GE Healthcare have a website for information on cleaning and disinfection?**
Yes, it can be found here for most devices: https://cleaning.gehealthcare.com/

Ultrasound probes can be found here or by linking to this site from the site above:
https://www.gehealthcare.com/products/ultrasound/ultrasound-transducers

Note – you may need to clear your cache in your web browser if you have accessed this website previously to ensure you have the most up to date information.

2. **What does GE Healthcare mean when it says it has evaluated cleaning agents?**
Cleaning agents listed in GE Healthcare product user manuals and on the GE Healthcare website are those for which GE Healthcare has performed testing to demonstrate that they do not damage our products after repeated cleanings.

3. **What would happen if I use a cleaning agent that has not been evaluated or have not passed material compatibility testing?**
The list of cleaning agents identifies which agents have been evaluated for cleaning compatibility with the materials used in our products. Cleaning agents that have not been evaluated or have not passed material compatibility testing could have an unknown or harmful impact if used on device surfaces. Impacts may include degrading cosmetic or functional performance, damaging device surfaces or labels, causing immediate equipment failure or even causing longer term latent failures.

4. **Has GE Healthcare evaluated cleaning agents for effectiveness for SARS-CoV-2?**
GE Healthcare has not tested any cleaning agents for disinfecting effectiveness against severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has released a list of disinfectants that claim to be effective for use against SARS-CoV-2. GE Healthcare has cross referenced the disinfectants from the EPA list with the cleaning agents identified in our product user manuals, which have undergone compatibility testing with our products. The cross-referenced list is posted on our website https://cleaning.gehealthcare.com/. Users should follow instructions provided by the cleaning agent manufacturer when using those disinfectants to clean GE Healthcare products. High-level disinfection and sterilization processes are approved through separate certification by regulatory bodies and may also be considered efficacious against **SARS-CoV-2.**

5. **Where should I go for more information related to cleaning and disinfection for SARS-CoV-2?**
Please follow your user manual for instructions regarding cleaning GE Healthcare products, and consult GE Healthcare's cleaner compatibility website at https://cleaning.gehealthcare.com.
The situation regarding SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 is rapidly evolving. New information is being gathered daily, you may be able to find additional information on the following websites:
- WHO:
https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus

https://www.who.int/infection-prevention/publications/decontamination/en/

- US CDC:
  https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2Fnovel-coronavirus-2019.html

  https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html

  https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/control-recommendations.html

- US EPA:
  https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-03/documents/sars-cov-2-list_03-03-2020.pdf

- European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC):
  https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/novel-coronavirus-china

- National Institute of Infectious Diseases, Japan
  https://www.niid.go.jp/niid/images/epi/corona/2019nCoV-01-200319.pdf

6. How do I find the correct product user manual?
You can access user manual information at the following website:
https://customer-doc.cloud.gehealthcare.com/#/cdp/dashboard

7. My GE Healthcare device isn't listed on GE Healthcare's cleaner compatibility website. What should I do?
The GE Healthcare website is being updated routinely. Additionally, your product user manual includes the cleaning agents that GE Healthcare has evaluated for material compatibility for your device. We recommend you also consult the user manual for cleaning instructions.

8. How can I clean and disinfect accessories to my GE Healthcare device?
You should only clean and disinfect accessories that are intended for multiple uses. GE Healthcare recommends consulting the manufacturer's user manual or contacting the accessory manufacturer for cleaning and disinfection instructions.

9. There are no disinfectants that the EPA has identified as being effective against SARS-CoV-2 for my device listed on your website, what should I do?
Your product user manual includes the cleaning agents that GE Healthcare has evaluated for material compatibility for your device. We recommend you also consult the user manual for cleaning instructions.

GE Healthcare cautions against using cleaning agents that have not been evaluated. Cleaning agents that have not been evaluated or not passed material compatibility testing could have an unknown or harmful impact on device surfaces. The use of cleaning agents that have not been evaluated could degrade cosmetic or functional performance, damage device surfaces or labels, cause immediate equipment failure or even cause longer term latent failures.

GE Healthcare is monitoring the EPA website as well as other external resources related to effectiveness of cleaning agents on SARS-CoV-2 and will update the GE Healthcare cleaner compatibility website as more information becomes available.

10. What if I live outside the United States and do not have any of the disinfectants that the EPA has identified as being effective against SARS-CoV-2 available in my country?
GE Healthcare is monitoring the EPA website as well as other external resources related to effectiveness of cleaning agents on SARS-CoV-2 and will update the GE Healthcare cleaner compatibility website as more information becomes available. Local health agencies may have additional information

There are also additional references available, for example the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides surface cleaning instructions for use during this COVID-19 pandemic: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html

Note - these are surface cleaning instructions only, for Anesthesia and Respiratory devices you should follow your device's user manual related to internal cleaning and disinfection.

Your product user manual includes the cleaning agents that GE Healthcare has evaluated for material compatibility for your device. We recommend you also consult the user manual for cleaning instructions. GE Healthcare cautions against using cleaning agents that have not been evaluated. Cleaning agents that have not been evaluated or not passed material compatibility testing could have an unknown or harmful impact on device surfaces. The use of cleaning agents that have not been evaluated could degrade cosmetic or functional performance, damage device surfaces or labels, cause immediate equipment failure or even cause longer term latent failures.

11. **What if the supply of disinfectants that the EPA has identified as being effective against SARS-CoV-2 has been exhausted?**
Your product user manual includes the cleaning agents that GE Healthcare has evaluated for material compatibility for your device. We recommend you also consult the user manual for cleaning instructions.

There are also additional references available, for example the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides surface cleaning instructions for use during this COVID-19 pandemic: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html

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12. **Can medical device fans spread SARS-CoV-2?**
Most electronic devices use fans to pull air into the system to cool electronic components. It is important to keep the air intake and output areas clear and separate from obstructions, material, or people. Many electronic devices also use filters to prevent dust, lint, and similar particles from entering the system, but those filters may not be intended to block any specific pathogen. There is no data regarding the spread of SARS-CoV-2 based on fans or air movement.

13. **How long does the novel coronavirus survive on surfaces?**
Please refer to the latest publications from scientific bodies regarding this data given that new information is emerging often. For example, the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) and World Health Organization (WHO) have published some information on survivability of SARS-CoV-2 on surfaces.

14. Can a GE Healthcare device (e.g. ultrasound scanner and probes, mobile x-ray etc...) be disinfected to safe levels after exposure to SARS-CoV-2?

GE Healthcare has not tested any cleaning agents for disinfecting effectiveness against severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has released a list of disinfectants that claim to be effective for use against SARS-CoV-2. GE Healthcare has cross referenced the disinfectants from the EPA list with the cleaning agents identified in our product user manuals, which have undergone compatibility testing with our products. The cross-referenced list is posted on our website https://cleaning.gehealthcare.com/. Users should follow instructions provided by the cleaning agent manufacturer when using those disinfectants to clean GE Healthcare products.

15. Can pathogens get inside a medical device and can they get out?

Some devices are sealed and may prevent ingress of pathogens. However, the majority of electronic devices have cooling pathways which may include fans. Therefore, pathogens could get inside the device and get out. Dust filters are present on a majority of electronic devices and are designed for the sole purpose of filtering out dust particles.

16. Can I clean and reuse an air filter on a medical device?

Your product user manual should be consulted for filter service instructions. If a new filter is available, the best option is to dispose of a potentially contaminated filter when it becomes clogged and replace with a new filter.

17. Should a HEPA filter be cut to size and placed over the dust filter to reduce medical device contamination?

No. It is highly likely that doing this would reduce sufficient airflow and cause the device to overheat, which may lead to loss of function (e.g. imaging during a procedure). The majority of electronic devices do not have airtight intake channels.

18. Can I wrap the medical device in plastic to reduce possible contamination?

No. The plastic will trap air and reduce airflow and possibly lead to overheating of electronic devices, which may lead to loss of function (e.g. imaging during a procedure). Some devices (e.g. ultrasound systems, patient tables etc...) could be wrapped in semi-permeable gowns or drapes, or custom coverings/drapes which could provide added protection against large droplets or contamination.

19. Should I use disposable probe covers to prevent SARS-CoV-2 transmission?

Using disposable covers can improve infection control. Always follow the cleaning instructions in your device's user manual.

20. I did not see any MR products on your website what information can you provide?

Initially some MR products may not have been present, however these devices should now be available. Please visit: https://cleaning.gehealthcare.com/ to find information on cleaning your devices.

21. Is there any additional PPE for infection control that I should consider?

It is important to follow the specific facilities/site local infection control protocols. The CDC has also published some Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations that can be found here:

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html

Note – refer to Material Safety Data Sheet from the cleaning agent manufacturer for any PPE related to that cleaning agent.

22. If my ventilator or anesthesia system was used on a suspected COVID-19 patient, what recommendations does GE Healthcare have to place the device back in use?

Facilities should follow their specific facilities/site local infection control protocols and reprocessing guidelines. For continued operation of the breathing system, clean and sterilize the system in accordance with the information present in your GE Healthcare user manual.

23.   Are there any other cleaning and disinfection resources that provide guidance SARS-CoV-2?

GE Healthcare is aware of ongoing work in clinician-to-clinician information and sharing sessions, such as webinars etc… please visit our website below for additional resources:

https://www.gehealthcare.com/corporate/covid-19-events-and-education