

Use of 70% alcohol only swabs for vascular access line care

C&W Campus

August 23, 2023

- HIGHLIGHTS**
- ▶ Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) has approved the use of 70% isopropyl alcohol only swabs for vascular access line care (central lines, peripheral intravenous (IV) lines & arterial lines), due to ongoing supply chain issues for 2% chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG) with 70% isopropyl alcohol swabs.
 - ▶ This practice will only be in place until the supply chain concerns are resolved.

What's new...What's the same?

- Vascular access line care may be performed with 70% isopropyl alcohol swabs, with the following exceptions: peripheral intravenous (IV) insertion, cap change procedures, central line dressing changes & arterial catheter insertion.
- For peripheral intravenous (IV) insertion, cap change procedures, central line dressing changes & arterial catheter insertion, continue to use 2% CHG & 70% products (see below for options).

How does this affect my practice? What do I need to do next?

- Best practice for vascular access line care is 2%CHG & 70% alcohol swabs. However, these swabs are currently unavailable. In the interim, 70% alcohol only swabs may be used for central line care in place of 2% CHG & 70% alcohol swabs except for cap change and central line dressing change.
- Once supply of 2%CHG & 70% alcohol swabs is restored at C&W campus, practice will revert back to best practice standards.
- For all peripheral intravenous (IV) insertion, cap change procedures, central line dressing changes & arterial catheter insertion, 2%CHG & 70% alcohol must be used.

Units may decide if they wish to use the following

- 2% CHG & 70% alcohol swab stick
- Liquid Baxedin 2% CHG /70% alcohol bottle with sterile gauze. Note the following best practice guidelines listed below should be followed.

Bottles must be:

- Designated to one patient, include a patient identifier label
- Labelled with date/time of opening and expiry – bottles must be discarded 7 days after opening
- Capped after use in a timely manner
- Discarded if contamination is suspected or confirmed

Baxedin must be poured into a sterile tray for use in order to wet sterile gauze. Any leftover Baxedin must be discarded after use.

What are some additional resources and supports?

- See SHOP for all vascular access lines procedures.
- [Intravenous \(IV\) Therapy: Over-the-needle cannula insertion: Procedure](#)
- [Changing the needleless connector on vascular access lines \(peripheral or central\)](#)

- [Central venous catheter change: cuffed CVC, cuffed peripherally inserted central catheter, hemodialysis/apheresis catheter, short term CVC](#)

Who do I contact for further information?

- IPAC (ext 6135) IPACS@cw.bc.ca
- Your area Clinical Nurse Educators and Clinical Resource Nurses