

JAM Session 17:

Sink Splashes-

Protect Clean from Contaminated



Sinks are considered contaminated zones. This includes the basin and surrounding area, where water contact can lead to splash and spread of microorganisms.

Why this matters:

When water hits the sink, it can create **splash or spray** that spreads microorganisms onto nearby countertops, medications and IV supplies, patient care equipment, your hands or clothing.

Even when surfaces look clean, splash contamination can still occur.



What staff should do:

- ◆ Maintain **clear separation** between sinks & medication preparation areas and clean supply storage.
- ◆ Perform hand hygiene in a way that **minimizes splash**
- ◆ Use **designated utility sinks** for disposal of contaminants
- ◆ Store supplies in **clean, dry, protected spaces**
- ◆ Keep items **away from sink areas where splash may occur**
- ◆ Report any **splashing, drainage, or sink function issues**



What should NEVER happen

- ◆ Placing **medications or clean supplies near sinks**
- ◆ Storing **clean items under or next to sinks**
- ◆ Using **hand hygiene sinks for disposal of body fluids** (unless designated)
- ◆ Allowing supplies or equipment to **contact the sink area**

If a splash guard is present—Splash guards can help reduce spread—but **they do NOT make the area “clean.”**

Splash guards become a risk when they are cracked, chipped, or damaged; made of hard-to-clean materials or edges; made of porous material such as wood; have visible soil buildup or residue; are poorly placed in a way that allows splash to go around or over the barrier.

When a splash guard is present, staff should:

- ⇒ Continue to **keep medications and clean supplies away** from the sink
- ⇒ Do **not rely on the guard alone** to protect clean items
- ⇒ Ensure the guard is **intact, properly positioned, and not bypassed by splash**
- ⇒ Clean and disinfect the guard **routinely**
- ⇒ Report if the guard is **loose, damaged, missing, or visibly soiled**