

**Technical Bulletin:
Decontamination of objects and surfaces**

The Centers for Disease Control, the federal agency charged with issuing guidelines for infection control, describe how to select the correct products and processes to make objects and surfaces safe for the next patient.

The table below summarizes current decontamination guidelines based on the Spaulding classification system and offers suggestions for application of Certol disinfectant products to meet the guidelines. Risk of transmitting disease determines how a patient-care item is processed. A secondary issue is the composition of the object and tolerance for heat sterilization.

Class	Application	Object / Surface Applications	Decontamination Method
Critical	Objects that enter patient's vascular system (induce bleeding) or enter into sterile tissue (surgery).	Scalpels, Implants Needles Instruments for extractions, Periodontal & hygiene procedures.	Use disposable items or heat sterilize.
Semi-critical	Instruments that contact mucous membranes and cannot be autoclaved. Heat tolerant instruments that contact mucous membranes or non-intact skin	Reusable plastic film holders; Some types of cheek retractors and props. Digital radiographic sensors; (Sensitive electronic equipment cannot be immersed or heat sterilized.) Restorative, orthodontic, Exam instruments, Handpieces.	Preclean, then soak in high level disinfectant such as glutaraldehyde (if instrument is heat sensitive) Do not spray or soak with disinfectants. Preclean sensors with ProSpray wipes towelettes, then cover with barrier: ProBarrier Tube Sox . Any instrument that is used intra-orally & is heat-tolerant should be heat sterilized.
Non-critical	Items or surfaces that come in contact with intact skin.	Surfaces frequently touched with contaminated hands: Dental unit trays, handles, switches, air/water syringe handle, suction controls. Operator stools & chairs. X-ray equipment, computer keyboard. Door knobs, phones, Countertops, faucets.	Dental setting is likely to include splatter with saliva and blood contaminants. Use an intermediate level disinfectant (tuberculocidal): ProSpray , liquid or wipes.