

FAQs for

Pathex™

60 Day Concentrated Surface Disinfectant/Cleaner and Holding Solution



What is Pathex?

Pathex is a concentrated intermediate-level tuberculocidal surface disinfectant and cleaner

approved for use in medical and dental settings. It is formulated to be diluted at 1:32 prior to use. The light lemon scent makes frequent disinfection tasks more pleasant for healthcare workers.

What is the benefit of “non-alcohol actives” in the Pathex formula?

- Disinfectants with alcohol tend to evaporate more quickly, sometimes before the full contact time required.
- Alcohol denatures blood and other protein soil, making it adhere to surfaces.
- Long term use of disinfectants with alcohol may cause tubing, vinyls and plastic housing to crack and discolor.
- The Centers for Disease Control advise that alcohol based disinfectants are not effective for environmental control of *Clostridium difficile*.

The Pathex water based formula is kinder to expensive equipment, stays wet longer for best contact time and provides the cleaning properties needed for ideal disinfection.

How should Pathex be used?

Following CDC recommendations, clean first then disinfect. Pathex has powerful detergents and is effective for both steps.

- Dilute Pathex according to package directions.
- Apply disinfectant with paper towels or other textile. Clean surfaces thoroughly. Discard used paper towels.
- Reapply disinfectant with fresh paper towels or other textile. Allow surface to remain wet for remaining contact time stated on the label.

Why is cleaning the most important step of the environmental disinfectant process?

- Organic body soils such as blood and inorganic dust soils act as a barrier between chemical disinfectants and germs on surfaces. Organic soils “absorb” chemical action and reduce antimicrobial efficacy especially in the case of bleach and alcohols.
- Some soils such as fecal matter and blood may sustain dangerous organisms over several days on otherwise dry surfaces.
- Patients perceive effective disinfection through sight and smell. The cleaning power and pleasant light lemon scent of Pathex provides reassurance to patients.

Does Pathex have a DIN registration?

Yes, it is regulated as a General Purpose, hard surface cleaner/disinfectant with registration # 01933663.

Can Pathex inactivate MRSA and H1N1 (Swine Flu) viruses?

Yes, Pathex is lab tested and approved by the EPA to kill MRSA-related staphylococcus aureus and Influenza A organism, in which H1N1 is classified.

The Pathex label lists a claim to kill tuberculosis bacteria. What about Hepatitis B and C?

The tuberculosis kill claim is used as a benchmark by the CDC (federal Centers for Disease Control) to designate Pathex as an intermediate-level disinfectant suitable for use where blood and other human soils are likely. The CDC also states that any germicide with a tuberculocidal claim on the label is considered capable of inactivating a broad spectrum of less resistant blood borne pathogens such as HIV, and Hepatitis B and C.

Does Pathex have residual antimicrobial properties on surfaces?

Yes, phenolics have demonstrated persistence of antimicrobial action on surfaces after the initial application. This action retards the regrowth of microbes on surfaces. Disinfectants with alcohol, bleach or quaternary ammonium actives do not demonstrate this property.

How long can I use Pathex?

The concentrated product has a 2 year shelf-life with expiration date marked on the container. Diluted Pathex has a use-life of 60 days. If diluted Pathex is used as an ultrasonic solution for instrument cleaning, or holding solution to keep soiled items wet, discard solution at least daily or when solution appears soiled. Store away from excessive heat and cold. Do not allow to freeze.

What is the chemical basis of the Pathex formula?

This product is a water based dual synthetic phenolic compound - two man made phenolics: o-phenylphenol and o-benzyl-p-chlorophenol. Pathex provides a higher concentration of active agents at use dilution than competitive phenolics. Synthetic phenolics combine reliable disinfectant qualities with demonstrated low toxicity.

Is it OK to use Pathex if it has turned brown?

Pathex concentrated solution ranges from golden brown to medium brown. The diluted use solution should be nearly colorless to light tan. Diluted solution that has turned medium to dark brown may be ineffective and should be discarded. Possible reasons for dark color include: outdated product (check expiration date); diluted solution that exceeds the 60 day use life; exposure to direct sunlight; or exposure to excessive heat during shipping or storage.

How can we cut down on aerosols created during disinfection?

- Use the "stream" mode on the spray nozzle to saturate paper towels or gauze. Then apply disinfectant to surfaces.
- Use optional "squirt caps" as alternative to spray heads.

Will Pathex stain surfaces?

No, it is non-staining and non-bleaching but after repeated use may leave a white residue film from the surfactants in the formula. It is easily removed by simply wiping surfaces with plain water and paper towels on a regular basis (at least weekly). Pathex actives may interact with bleach, creating a brownish stain on surfaces or textiles. This stain may be permanent. Avoid use of Pathex in conjunction with bleach. Rinse uniforms and towels in plain water prior to laundry cycles with bleach products.

Can I use Pathex as a "cold sterile" disinfectant soak for plastic items that cannot tolerate heat sterilization?

Items that are used inside the mouth or other mucosal surfaces are considered "semi-critical". Examples include bite blocks, plastic film positioning devices, and laryngeal airway devices. If items are reused for another patient, they must be heat sterilized or immersed in high level liquid disinfectant (gluteraldehyde, peracetic acid, etc.). Pathex is classified as an intermediate level disinfectant and is not intended for this type of application. It is appropriate for use as a holding solution to keep soils wet on contaminated instruments; or may be used as ultrasonic solution to clean instruments. Use a lid on the soak pan or ultrasonic tank to reduce aerosols and vapors.

Is it OK to saturate a stack of gauze pads with Pathex solution for use throughout the day?

This is not recommended. Gauze fibers may interact with disinfectant agents and reduce efficacy. Reaching into a container introduces potential contamination.

References:

CDC Guidelines for Disinfection and Sterilization in Healthcare Facilities, 2008.