

Don't Launder Surgical Attire at Home, AORN Recommends

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DENVER — An Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN) committee recommends that surgical attire such as scrubs be laundered by the healthcare institution or by a third-party laundry facility and not at home by the healthcare worker.

The recommendation was one of 10 "Recommended Practices for Surgical Attire" introduced by the Recommended Practices Review Committee during the AORN Congress last week.

Healthcare-approved and accredited laundry facilities are preferred because they follow industry standards to clean and decontaminate surgical attire, according to the recommendation. The Healthcare Laundry Accreditation Council (HLAC) offers voluntary accreditation for laundry facilities that incorporate Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines and recommended practices.

"Home laundries are not monitored for quality, consistency, or safety," the recommendation reads in part. "Exposure of health care personnel and their family members to blood and other potentially infectious materials may result from improper handling and decontamination of surgical attire. Home washers are designed for home use and are not built for hazards identified by the OSHA bloodborne [pathogens] standard."

The recommendations are open for public review and comment for a limited time here. Click on "Public Review Commenting" and look for "Recommendation VII" within "Recommended Practices for Surgical Attire."



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