

FABRIC CARE BULLETIN

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE): GOWN PROCESSING TIPS

PPE CHARACTERISTICS

Intended Use - Personal protective gowns can vary in intended use based on claims. Protection claims can range from keeping the wearer's garments clean, e.g., cover gowns, to protecting surgical staff from bloodborne pathogens, e.g., surgical gowns.

Material Composition – A majority of reusable fabrics are polyester, cotton or a blend. Filament polyester yarns are a preference for healthcare PPE's whereas general use products are generally made from spun yarns. Both reusable and single use manufacturers impart liquid resistant properties to PPE by use of fluoropolymer finishes, coatings or laminations using membranes for higher levels of protection.

BEST PRACTICES

- * Keep yourself safe when handling all soiled linen. If it is not yours, assume it may contain a hazard, e.g., blood, needles, etc. PPE for protecting one's hands and face should be available for these situations.
- * Launder used gowns as soon as possible after use. The sooner gowns are laundered, the less chance there is for staining.
- * Gowns should be laundered on a regular schedule. Daily for personal use, after individual use or immediately after being soiled. This will maintain the best gown performance and life.
- * Do not overload washing equipment.
- * Do not mix types of products being washed, e.g., terry can cause linting.
- * Items need to be completely rinsed for best barrier performance – correct loading, do not overuse detergent and select a cycle with multiple rinses which meets gown manufacturers care labeling.
- * Hang or fold gowns immediately after drying cycle is complete.

HOW TO WASH

Follow manufacturer's recommendations for selecting the washing and drying conditions to be used!



These instructions will be found on the sew-in care labels either in text and/or symbols.

WHAT NOT TO WASH

Soiled healthcare textiles especially those PPE's used in hospitals where medical devices are required, e.g., surgical gowns, isolation gown, etc. These items should be processed by a professional healthcare laundry. Home laundering is frowned upon for these PPE's not only to protect family members but also due to the lack of effective home processing conditions and equipment.

CDC GUIDANCE FOR COMMERCIAL LAUNDERING

The Centers for Disease Control has identified two conditions that each independently can render soiled healthcare linen safe for reuse – 160°F washing for 25 minutes or the use of chlorine bleach.

Note: The maximum temperature set on most residential water heaters is $\leq 140^{\circ}\text{F}$.

For additional information contact the Technical Affairs Department: 513.761.9255