

# Define the 'chain of infection'.

Source → Mode of transmission → Susceptible host.

**List three main routes of cross-infection in dentistry.**

Direct contact,  
indirect contact via  
instruments,  
airborne/aerosols.

**Which bloodborne viruses are of highest concern in dentistry?**

Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV.

**Which bacterium is resistant to alcohol rub and requires soap/water?**

**Clostridium difficile.**

# What does 'standard precautions' mean?

Precautions applied universally to all patients, regardless of infection status.

**Airborne  
transmission is a key  
risk for which dental  
procedures?**

Ultrasonic scaling,  
high-speed drilling,  
use of 3-in-1 syringes.

**Which TB strain is of concern in healthcare settings?**

Multidrug-resistant  
*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*.

**What is the single  
most effective  
measure to prevent  
cross-infection?**

Hand hygiene.

**Which microorganism  
is associated with  
MRSA?**

**Methicillin-resistant  
Staphylococcus  
aureus.**

**COVID-19  
transmission in  
dental settings is  
mainly via?**

**Respiratory droplets  
and aerosols.**

# List the WHO '5 moments of hand hygiene'.

Before patient contact, before aseptic task, after body fluid exposure, after patient contact, after contact with patient surroundings.

**Minimum duration of  
effective  
handwashing with  
soap and water?**

**40–60 seconds.**

**Minimum duration for  
alcohol-based hand  
rub?**

**20–30 seconds.**

**True or False:  
Jewellery should be  
removed before hand  
hygiene.**

**True.**

# Correct order for donning PPE.

Apron → Mask → Eye protection → Gloves.

# Correct order for doffing PPE.

Gloves → Apron → Eye  
protection → Mask.

**Which PPE item  
provides the greatest  
protection against  
aerosol inhalation?**

**Respirator mask  
(FFP2/FFP3).**

# Why are latex gloves less recommended?

Risk of allergy and reduced durability compared to nitrile gloves.

**When must gloves  
always be changed?**

Between patients and  
between different  
tasks on the same  
patient.

**Face masks should be replaced when?**

Between patients or when moist/soiled.

**Eye protection must conform to which standard?**

**EN166 standard.**

# **Why are visors not a substitute for masks?**

They protect from splashes but not inhalation of aerosols.

**What type of apron should be used during dental treatment?**

Single-use disposable plastic apron.

**True or False: Alcohol hand rub is sufficient after removing gloves.**

False – hands should be washed if visibly soiled.

**List the three  
instrument  
classifications in HTM  
01-05.**

**Critical, Semi-critical,  
Non-critical.**

# Define 'critical instrument'.

Instrument that penetrates soft tissue or bone, e.g., surgical forceps.

# Define 'semi-critical instrument'.

Contacts mucous membranes but does not penetrate, e.g., dental mirrors.

# Define 'non-critical instrument'.

Contacts intact skin only, e.g., blood pressure cuff.

**What is the preferred method of cleaning dental instruments?**

**Automated washer-disinfector.**

# **Why is manual cleaning discouraged?**

**Inconsistent cleaning  
and increased risk of  
sharps injury.**

**What is the main role of ultrasonic baths?**

To loosen debris via cavitation before sterilisation.

**State the minimum  
autoclave  
sterilisation  
parameters.**

**134–137°C for 3  
minutes holding time.**

**Name two types of autoclaves.**

**Vacuum (Type B) and non-vacuum (Type N).**

# **Why is vacuum autoclave preferred for hollow instruments?**

Ensures steam  
penetration into  
lumens and complex  
instruments.

# What is 'validation' in sterilisation?

Documented evidence that equipment consistently achieves sterilisation parameters.

**What daily test is required for autoclaves?**

Steam penetration test or daily automatic control test.

**How often should a protein residue test be done?**

**Weekly, to confirm cleaning efficacy.**

**What is the  
acceptable storage  
period for sterilised  
instruments in sealed  
pouches?**

**Up to 1 year if  
packaging is intact  
and dry.**

**What symbol on a  
sterilisation pouch  
indicates  
sterilisation?**

Colour-change  
chemical indicator.

**What must be recorded in an instrument tracking system?**

Cycle number, date, operator, patient ID (if applicable).

# **Difference between disinfection and sterilisation?**

Disinfection reduces pathogens but not spores; sterilisation eliminates all microorganisms including spores.

# **Why are chemical cold sterilisers not recommended?**

**Ineffective against prions and unreliable sterility assurance.**

**Which infection control issue are prions associated with?**

Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD).

**True or False:  
Instruments should  
be bagged prior to  
sterilisation.**

True, unless used  
immediately.

**What are the two main zones in dental surgery according to HTM 01-05?**

**Clean zone and dirty zone.**

**How often should  
environmental  
surfaces be cleaned?**

**Between patients and  
at the end of each  
session.**

**What should be used  
to decontaminate  
dental chair surfaces?**

Detergent wipes or  
disinfectant wipes as  
per HTM 01-05.

**How often should  
suction lines be  
flushed?**

Daily and between  
patients with  
appropriate  
disinfectant.

**What is the risk with untreated dental unit waterlines?**

**Biofilm formation and bacterial contamination.**

# **How often should waterlines be flushed?**

At start and end of  
day, and between  
patients.

**Which colour-coded bag is used for infectious waste not containing medicines?**

**Orange.**

**Which colour-coded bag is used for medicinally contaminated infectious waste?**

**Yellow.**

**Which waste stream is  
for amalgam-  
contaminated items?**

White rigid container  
with mercury  
suppressant.

**Sharps bins must conform to which standard?**

**BS EN ISO 23907.**

**What is the maximum fill level for sharps bins?**

**Three-quarters full or manufacturer's line.**

**What should be done immediately after a needlestick injury?**

Encourage bleeding, wash thoroughly, report, and follow sharps protocol.

# **What is the RIDDOR requirement for sharps injuries?**

Report sharps injuries  
that involve  
bloodborne virus  
exposure.

**Which waste stream  
is used for domestic-  
type waste?**

**Black bag.**

**Which waste stream is  
used for  
cytotoxic/cytostatic  
waste?**

**Purple bag/container.**

**What is the minimum  
PPE when handling  
clinical waste?**

**Gloves and apron.**

# **First action if you sustain a needlestick injury?**

**Encourage bleeding and wash under running water.**

**What is the next step  
after first aid for  
needlestick?**

**Report immediately  
and attend  
occupational health.**

# **When is post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) considered?**

After significant exposure to HIV-positive blood or high-risk source.

**Which respiratory infection requires airborne isolation precautions?**

**Tuberculosis  
(especially MDR-TB).**

**How should a patient with suspected TB be managed in dental practice?**

Defer non-urgent treatment and refer to secondary care.

**Which patients are considered unsuitable for exposure-prone procedures?**

Those positive for bloodborne viruses without clearance under OH guidance.

# **What is an exposure-prone procedure (EPP)?**

A procedure where there is a risk of injury to the worker leading to exposure to patient's open tissues.

**What precautions  
apply to suspected  
COVID-19 cases?**

Isolate, postpone  
elective treatment,  
enhanced PPE if  
emergency care  
needed.

**Which agency  
provides PEP  
guidance for HIV  
exposure?**

**UK Health Security  
Agency (formerly  
PHE).**

# **Define an outbreak in infection control terms.**

Two or more linked cases of the same infection in the same setting.

**What is the reporting duty if a dental practice identifies an outbreak?**

**Notify local Health Protection Team (HPT).**

**True or False: All staff  
must receive  
immunisation against  
Hepatitis B.**

True – essential for  
healthcare workers.

**What is the key UK guidance document for decontamination in primary care dentistry?**

**HTM 01-05 (2013).**

# What does HTM stand for?

Health Technical Memorandum.

# **Define 'essential requirements' in HTM 01-05.**

Minimum legal standard that must be achieved in all practices.

# **Define 'best practice' in HTM 01-05.**

Higher standards  
expected by  
regulators such as  
CQC, aspirational but  
often required.

**Which regulator  
inspects infection  
control compliance in  
England?**

Care Quality  
Commission (CQC).

**Which GDC principle  
most relates to  
infection control?**

**Principle 1: Put  
patients' interests  
first (ensure their  
safety).**

# What is the CPD requirement related to infection control for dental nurses?

At least 10 hours in infection control/decontamination per 5-year cycle.

**What records must be kept for autoclave use?**

Cycle parameters,  
validation tests,  
service/maintenance  
logs.

**How often must staff receive infection control training?**

At induction and updated regularly (usually annually).

**Which agency publishes guidance on waste management in healthcare?**

HTM 07-01 (Safe management of healthcare waste).

**What is the legal requirement under COSHH relevant to infection control?**

Employers must assess and control exposure to hazardous substances, including disinfectants and biological agents.

**True or False: GDC standards require dental professionals to raise concerns if infection control is compromised.**

True – duty of candour and patient safety.