

Sinks: A Mode of Infection Transmission

Biofilm can build up in handwashing sink drains. This can allow organisms that live in the pipes/drain to contaminate the environment from splashing water when the sink is used. Sinks in healthcare settings should have a clear three-foot splash zone and faucets offset from the drain to reduce this risk.



Do not empty body fluids down the drain.



Do not empty IV bags, antibiotics, other IV additives or medications down the drain.



Do not pour liquid enteral food or food supplements down the drain.



Do not store patient/resident care items by sinks.



For more information reach out to the MDPH HAI/AR Program at infectioncontrolMA@mass.gov

See CDC's Reduce Risk from Water website: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthcare-associated-infections/php/toolkit/water-management.html>

Make sure your facility water management plan addresses sink hygiene in patient care areas:

- ◆ Are there clear three-foot splash zones or splash guards in place?
- ◆ Review where things are stored around/below the sink.
- ◆ Are the faucets offset from the drain?
- ◆ Make sure sinks are draining properly.