

USAID MTaPS PROGRAM: COVID-19 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Disposal Procedures for COVID-19-Related Medical Waste^{1,2,3,4}

Follow standard infection prevention control practices at all times. These include:

- Hand hygiene
- Using personal protective equipment (e.g., water-resistant apron, gloves, masks, eyewear)
- Safe handling of sharps and infectious waste
- Disinfecting instruments and devices used on the patient
- Disinfecting linen and cleaning and disinfecting environmental surfaces

The most important information concerning water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), waste management, and COVID-19 is summarized here.¹

- Frequent and proper hand hygiene is one of the most important measures that can be used to prevent infection with COVID-19. WASH practitioners should work to enable more frequent and regular hand hygiene by improving facilities and using proven behavior-change techniques.
- WHO guidance on the safe management of drinking water and sanitation services applies to the COVID-19 outbreak. Extra measures are not needed. Disinfection will facilitate more rapid die-off of COVID-19.
- Many co-benefits will be realized by safely managing water and sanitation services and applying good hygiene practices.

All health care waste produced during the care of COVID-19 patients (including disposable personal protection equipment) should be collected safely in designated containers and bags, treated, and then safely disposed of and/or treated, preferably onsite. If waste is moved off-site, it is critical to understand where and how it will be treated and destroyed.

1. All waste generated from suspected or confirmed patients shall be disposed of as medical waste.³
2. Put medical waste into a double-layer medical waste bag, seal the bag with cable ties in a gooseneck fashion, and spray the bag with 1,000 mg/L chlorine-containing disinfectant.
3. Put sharp objects into a special sharps box, seal the box, and spray the box with 1,000 mg/L chlorine-containing disinfectant.
4. Put the bagged waste into a medical waste transfer box, attach a special infection label, and fully close the box.
5. Transfer the waste box to a temporary storage point for medical waste along a specified route at a specified point in time and store the waste separately at a fixed location.
6. The medical waste shall be collected and disposed of by an approved medical waste disposal provider.
7. Before being discharged into the municipal drainage system, fecal matter and sewage must be disinfected by treating with chlorine-containing disinfectant (for the initial treatment, the active chlorine must be more than 40 mg/L). Make sure the disinfection time is at least 1.5 hours. The concentration of total residual chlorine in the disinfected sewage should reach 10 mg/L.

REFERENCES

¹ WHO. Water, sanitation, hygiene and waste management for COVID-19. <https://www.who.int/publications-detail/water-sanitation-hygiene-and-waste-management-for-covid-19>

² CDC. Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Healthcare Settings. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/control-recommendations.html#adhere>

³First Affiliated Hospital, Zhejiang University School of Medicine. Handbook of COVID-19 Prevention and Treatment, pg. 15. <https://covid-19.alibabacloud.com/>

⁴ Government of India Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Directorate General of Health Services (EMR Division). COVID-19: Guidelines on Dead Body Management; https://www.mohfw.gov.in/1584423700568_COVID19GuidelinesonDeadbodymanagement.pdf

The USAID Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services (MTaPS) program helps low- and middle-income countries to strengthen their pharmaceutical systems, pivotal to better health outcomes and higher-performing health systems. The program is implemented by a consortium of global and local partners, led by Management Sciences for Health (MSH), a global health nonprofit.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

MTaPS COVID-19 Team | mtaps-hqcovid19@mtapsprogram.org