

Spring Into Safe Travel

As spring approaches, many look forward to sunny, tropical destinations and a long week of relaxation. Be warned that not all vacation destinations are created equal. Yale University urges travelers to assess risks prior to travel and deploy safe practices during travel. Fully vaccinated staff who travel outside of Connecticut should obtain a COVID-19 test upon their return. Staff who are not fully vaccinated and travel outside of Connecticut should quarantine and obtain a COVID-19 test upon their return. See [Yale's Travel Policy](#) for more information. The [CDC's COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Destination](#) website provides risk assessments that warn against nonessential travel to specific locations.

Clinical Safety Moment: Breaks in Skin

Employees with breaks in their skin should not handle blood or other potentially infectious materials. Employees should consult with immediate supervisors and [Yale Health's Employee Health Department](#) to evaluate and determine if waterproof bandages and double gloving can serve as a barrier to exposure.

Gloves and a lab coat are worn to protect the skin and clothing from contact with potentially infectious materials.

Wear gloves that are long enough to extend over the sleeves of the lab coat and cover wrists. It is important to cover all skin surfaces and jewelry. Consider double gloving when working with cultures of infectious agents or handling spills of potentially infectious materials. Be aware that gloves are sold with allowable leak rates, but double gloving will provide the extra margin of protection, especially for higher risk activities. Studies have demonstrated that the protection - offered by single gloving is only 85 percent, while double gloving provides protection greater than 98 percent (1). Alternatively, household utility gloves can be worn when cleaning spills. Household utility gloves may be decontaminated and reused, but should be replaced when compromised.

When removing PPE and wearing double gloves, remove the outer gloves before removing your lab coat or solid front gown to avoid contamination.

Clinic Surveys at Yale University

In 2021, EHS conducted over 70 health and safety audits of different Yale University clinics. The most frequently identified issues were:

- Expired Chemicals (e.g., disinfectant, hand sanitizer)/medications.
- General clinic facility issues (e.g., stained ceiling tiles, damaged walls).
- Improper storage of medication and medical supplies (e.g., needles stored in unlocked cabinets, medication stored in specimen-only refrigerators).

If you have questions or concerns about clinic facility safety issues, please contact Emily Bludnicki at 203-737-2127 or emily.bludnicki@yale.edu. Questions related to biomedical and chemical waste should be directed to Environmental Affairs at 203-432-6545 or waste.requests@yale.edu.

References:

1. Makama, J.G. et al, "Glove Perforation Rate in Surgery: A Randomized, Controlled Study to Evaluate the Efficacy of Double Gloving," *Surgical Infections*, Vol. 17 No. 4, pp 436-442, March 16, 2016

