

Medical gowns, gloves often source of contamination: study

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But researchers say that education and practice can dramatically improve health care worker hygiene.

(HealthDay)—Health care workers often contaminate their skin and clothing when they remove their medical gowns and gloves, new research suggests.

For the study, workers at four Ohio hospitals simulated gown and glove removal. Additional [health care workers](#) from a separate facility participated in a program that included education and practice of removing contaminated gowns and gloves.

The health care workers simulated 435 gown and glove removals. The researchers used a fluorescent lotion to determine "contamination." Skin or [clothing](#) got contaminated 46 percent of the time, the investigators found.

But, the education and practice program led to a significant drop in the contamination rate—from 60 percent to about 19 percent, the findings showed.

This improvement lasted even when [health care](#) workers were retested after one and three months, Dr. Curtis Donskey, of the Cleveland Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and colleagues reported in the study published in the Oct. 12 issue of *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

The study findings highlight the urgent need to come up with ways to reduce the risk of contamination, Donskey said in a journal news release.

It's also important to figure out better ways to train people in how to best remove these items, Donskey's team said. And, ideally, the design of protective clothing should be improved to reduce the risk of contamination, the study authors suggested.

More information: The U.S. National Library of Medicine has more about [job safety for health care workers](#).

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