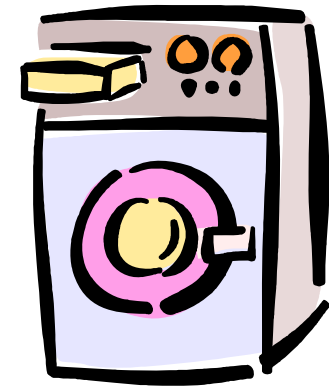


If you would like any further information please contact  
the Infection Control Team

## Washing clothes at home

**Infection Control Team:**



**Issue Date: September 2009**  
**Review Date: September 2012**

*Carer's Advice Leaflet*

**Advice for Carers taking home  
clothing contaminated with  
body fluids, including faeces.**

**Advice for Carers taking home clothing contaminated with body fluids, including faeces.**

**Please do not ask staff to wash clothing for you as they do not have the facilities to do so.**

**The risk of infection to you and your family is low, but the information in this leaflet will help you handle the clothes safely.**

- Staff in the ward will place any contaminated laundry into two plastic bags, the outer is for transport home but the inner bag will partially dissolve in your washing machine and should not be removed before laundering.
- Any contaminated clothing should be machine washed as soon as possible after you return home.



- The soiled clothing should not be mixed with other household items. This may mean that you will have to wash half a load.
- Remove clothing from outer bag and place inner dissolvable bag directly into the washing machine. The outer bag should be placed into your household rubbish.
- Wash the clothing using, if possible, a biological washing powder/liquid, in the highest temperature possible that the garment material will tolerate (ideally this should be 60°C or above) following the garment washing instructions. It is the combination of sufficient water to rinse the load well and heat in the last stage of the process that ensures that both bacteria and viruses are killed.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after putting the clothing into the washing machine.

- At the end of the wash cycle, remove the partially dissolved bag and place it into your household rubbish.
- Clothing should be either air dried or tumble dried and then ironed, if fabric allows.



**PLEASE:**

- **DO NOT** rinse out clothes – this only leads to contamination of the sink and possibly yourself.
- **DO NOT** soak clothes in disinfectant – this will either only partially remove the physical soiling and leave other areas dirty or bleach the clothing and spoil the fibres.
- **DO NOT** boil wash – man-made fibres will shrink and wool will be ruined.