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# FABRIC

## Healthcare Bulletin



In the Healthcare Environment, design and furniture considerations are complex and strongly dependent on the type of facility and patient being served. Lessons learned in the cleaning of this environment can be applied across all markets to address concerns with infection control and the cleaning of high-touch surfaces.

## Product Selection

In Healthcare, we look for products with the following criteria: non-porous, wipeable materials and open design features that make the product easy to clean.

- Surfaces that are smooth with minimal gaps or crevices.
- Upholstery without welting or excessive tufting.
- Mesh and small perforations are harder to clean.
- Wood arms can be used if the cleaner is compatible with the wood protective topcoat.

## Cleaning

The client is responsible for internal cleaning protocols and should advise the design team on the types of cleaners (detergents and disinfectants) being used. The CDC has listed recommended cleaners based on the bacteria and viruses expected to be found in the clinical space. (Hospitals see more resistant bacteria and viruses in their settings than the general public.)

- CDC link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>
- Ensure the fabric is compatible with the cleaner by checking with the fabric manufacturer. Each website search filter is a bit different, so ask the manufacturer rep if you need guidance.
- If you do not initially have a cleaning solution identified, start by looking at bleach cleanable (10:1) fabrics for the initial selections. Validate final fabric selection against client's designated cleaner.
- The proper cleaning process is to **clean** (remove dirt and debris), **disinfect** and then **wipe with clean water** to remove any residue. Each of these steps is important to proper fabric care.

## Fabric Selection

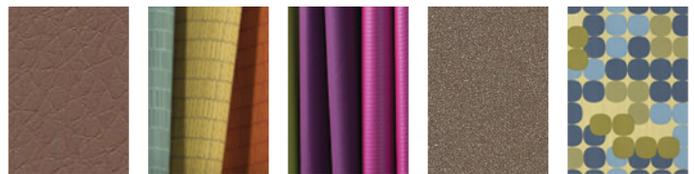
Healthcare uses "High Performance Fabrics" that are easy to clean, support stronger cleaners and withstand the wear and tear experienced in high traffic areas. They include both Woven and Non-Woven options.

### Woven Fabrics



- Available in many patterns and solids.
  - Polyester
  - Nylon (Solution Dyed Fiber)
- Treated with coatings (i.e. Crypton, Nano Tech) that are environmentally friendly, protect the fabrics and make them cleanable, disinfectable, and water-resistant.
- Are slightly thicker and stiffer than standard fabric and can be seen on banquette seats in well-designed restaurants or the exam guest chairs in some doctor offices.

### Non-Woven Fabrics



- Available in solid, embossed, and patterned.
  - Polyurethane
  - Silicone
  - TPE
  - Nylon
  - Vinyl (for some clients, not approved for LEED)
- Can have a faux leather look, smooth or a textured pattern.
- Are easy to clean and water repellent.

**Moisture Barriers** are very specific to healthcare and most likely not needed outside of that environment.

**Antimicrobial Treatments** are not used as often in healthcare environments.

- Some chemicals used to inhibit growth of microorganisms such as bacteria and fungi are toxic. They may cause health problems in patients and create more resilient 'super bugs.'
- Link to white paper: <https://www.designtex.com/media/pdf/DT-Antimicrobials-200428.pdf>
- Naturally occurring antimicrobials such as copper and brass have been used over the centuries, although the use in healthcare has not really taken hold. If you are considering any products that use these materials, ask the manufacturer for the testing results to prove efficacy.

**Fire-Retardant Chemicals (FR)** are NOT allowed in any fabric in California.

- CA Assembly Bill 2998, effective January 1, 2020, requires the removal of fire retardants from upholstered furniture.
- FR-free designation is noted on the manufacturer's website.

## Privacy Curtains

Some corporate clients have clinics on site. Normally, fabric privacy curtains would be recommended as attractive and washable partitions. They are hung from a track on the ceiling and, with some effort, can be removed for cleaning and/or replacement. Hospitals have been migrating to disposable paper privacy curtains that can be changed more often. Even with constant cleaning and replacing, privacy curtains are highly susceptible to harboring viruses and bacteria. With the current need for increased cleaning of these high touch areas, freestanding opaque partitions should be considered.

## Fabric Manufacturers

The following links are recommended resources.

Designtex - <https://www.designtex.com/>

LDI - <https://www.lidiinteriors.com/>

Carnegie - <https://carnegiefabrics.com/>

Momentum - [https://www.memosamples.com/momentum\\_textiles.shtml](https://www.memosamples.com/momentum_textiles.shtml)

Pallas - <https://www.pallastextiles.com/>

Ultrafabrics - <https://www.ultrafabricsinc.com/>

## Useful Links

Designtex Status Page - <https://www.designtex.com/status-page>

LDI - <https://www.lidiinteriors.com/about/infection-control>

For additional information or consultation, please reach out directly to:

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