

 <p>TEN TEXPROS CO. LIMITED Africa's Premier Provider of Linen Solutions</p>	Doc No: TTP.R.L.012	Prepared By: Ssemuyiga Denis
	Version: 01 Revision Date: 17 th , Jul 2025	Approved by: Deo Ssekidde

TEN TEXPROS LAUNDRY SERVICES

GUIDELINE ON STAIN REMOVAL TECHNIQUES

INTRODUCTION

A stain is a spot or mark of discoloration on linen materials caused by the contact and absorption of foreign substances. The technique to remove stains from linen depends on the type of stain, fabric and age of the stain. Different types of stains require different removal technique. The longer a stain stays in a fabric the harder it becomes to remove. Stains in cotton and linen fabrics have the most removal options than any other type of fabric. This is because cotton or linen fabrics are strong enough to endure hot water, cold water, chemicals, repeated washing and scrubbing than synthetic, wool or other types of fabrics. Stain removal becomes easier if treated promptly and an appropriate removal technique is used. Delays in removing stains or using a wrong removal method may set the stain permanently leading to its damaging and condemnation. Good stain removal practices maintain linen in good condition, prolongs its life span and saves costs on linen replacement.

PURPOSE

The document serves as a guide on the appropriate stain removal techniques from linen. It states the different types of stains, their examples and the appropriate stain removal method that can be applied on each type of stain to maintain linen in good condition and prolong its life span for cost effectiveness advantage.

SCOPE

This guideline shall be used by laundry staff, housekeepers and ward staff to understand the different types of stains, the common stains in the hospital and the right removal techniques to use on each type of stain. It shall also guide management on the suitable stain removers and chemicals to procure for effective stain removal.

RESPONSIBILITY

It shall be the responsibility of the supervisor to train staff in appropriate stain management techniques.

Laundry staff, housekeepers and nurses shall adhere to principles of good stain removal techniques.

Management have the responsibility to provide all materials required to ensure appropriate stain management.

GENERAL RULES WHEN REMOVING STAINS

- Treat stains promptly. Fresh stains are easier to remove than old ones.
- Identify stain and fiber content of linen article.
- Read and follow package directions when using any stain removal product.
- Always test stain removers on an inside seam or other hidden part of garment for color fastness. To test, apply product and let stand 2-5 minutes, then rinse. If color changes, do not use product on garment.
- When using a bleach, do not try to bleach just one area of garment; bleach the entire garment to prevent uneven color removal.
- When treating, place stained area face down on a clean paper towel or white cloth. Apply stain remover to the underside of the stain, forcing stain off the fabric surface instead of through it.
- Never put chemical dry-cleaning solvents directly into washer.
- Thoroughly rinse and air-dry areas treated with dry-cleaning solvents before placing in washer, to avoid a fire.
- Do not mix stain removal products together. Some mixtures, such as chlorine bleach ammonia or vinegar, can produce noxious fumes.
- Always launder washable items after treating to remove residues of the stain and the stain remover.
- Have patience; it takes a little extra time and effort to remove some stains.
- Remember, some stains cannot be removed.
- Take non-washable items to dry cleaner as soon as possible.
- Do not use chlorine bleach on fabrics containing silk, wool, spandex, urethane fabrics, polyurethane foam, and some special finishes on fabrics. Check the label for directions.

Classification of stains

No	TYPE OF STAIN	SOURCE AND EXAMPLE	GENERAL REMOVAL TECHNIQUE
1	Protein stains	These come from animal-based products e.g. eggs, milk, cheese, sauce, ice cream, blood, urine, feces, vomitus, mucous, and mud	Scrape off as much solid as possible. Rinse the area under running cold to lukewarm water and apply a laundry detergent to the stain. Allow the laundry detergent to soak in and wash the fabric in cold water. Never use hot water until all the protein has been removed, as hot water may set the protein stain permanently.

2	Oil-based stains	These come from automotive oils and plant and animal oils such as cooking fats and oils, bacon fats, butter/margarine, hand lotion, cosmetics, deodorant, face creams, mayonnaise, hair oil	Presoak the stain in laundry detergent and wash with hot water. Repeat the step for thorough removal. A laundry spot treatment cleaner for oil stains can be very effective in removing such stains. Never dry the garment before thorough stain removal, as drying may set the stain permanently.
3	Tannin stains	Beer, wine, cologne, tea, coffee, cola drinks, tomato juices, fruit juices from real berries, washable ink, felt-tip water color markers.	Rinse the stain with cold water and wash the garment in hot water. If the stain remains, apply a non-soap pretreatment detergent, allow it to soak for 30 minutes before washing in hot water. Never use soaps on tannin stains, as soap will set the stain permanently.
4	Dye	Dye stains come from things such as mustard, children's juice drinks, jelly, grass, inks and felt-tip pens.	Rub a pretreatment detergent into the stain and wash with hot water. Note that most dye stains require pretreatment. Or soak color safe linen in color safe bleach to remove all the dye stain.
5	Combination	These are made of more than one type of stain and contain usually oil or wax component and dye or pigment component e.g. tomato sauce, crayons, ketchup, gravy, shoe polish, chocolate, candle wax, ball point ink, carbon paper, eye make-up, lipstick, hair spray, face make-up, barbecue sauce, furniture polish, livestock paint.	Treat the stain as an oil stain first and clean it to remove the dye.
6	Mineral stains	Rust, medicines, ink,	Oxidization or reduction (bleaching) followed by washing.
7	Miscellaneous stains- More difficult stains to remove	Chewing gum, Iodine, odor, perspiration	These are special treatment which need specific treatment.

COMMON STAINS IN THE HOSPITAL LAUNDRY AND THEIR TREATMENT

Below are the individual stains commonly associated in our hospital laundry and their specific removal techniques.

No	Stain	Removal technique
1	Blood	Scrape off as much solid as possible. Soak in cold water for about an hour and then transfer to lukewarm water containing the enzyme detergent. Soak for 30 minutes and launder. Or soak in cold water in which common salt is added (10 table spoons in a liter) for about an hour and launder. Or apply hydrogen peroxide direct to the stain and watch it magically rinse away.
2	Faeces	Softly scoop off excess solids from linen. Run the fabric inside out under cold water to flush out as much faeces as possible. Pretreat and soak the fabric in warm water with a laundry detergent which contains enzymes. Pre-soak for 30 minutes or above. Launder. Soak aged stains for long hours. If stain persists, Chlorine bleach if safe for the fabric or oxygen bleach. Disinfect the washing machine before laundering anything else in it.
3	Vomit	Quickly scoop off excess solids from linen. Run cold water from the back of the stain. Machine wash as normal, using a biological detergent. Or soak in cold water with a bleach detergent that is color safe.
4	Perspiration	Apply a liquid detergent or pre-wash stain remover and allow it to sit as directed or soak in warm water with presoak for 20-30 minutes. Launder fabric in hottest water recommended for the fabric using an enzyme detergent and oxygen bleach.
5	Rust	Apply rust remover on white and colorfast fabrics. Follow manufacturer's instructions. Many rust removers are extremely toxic and can burn skin and damage appliance finishes. Never use chlorine bleach on rust stains, as it set them permanent. Or lemon juice and salt can be effective. Sprinkle salt on the stain, squeeze lemon juice on it and spread the fabric in the sun for an hour or above to dry. Launder. Sunlight can encourage a rust stain to fade. Remember both lemon juice and sunlight can bleach colors. Sunlight also may turn some white fabrics yellow.
6	Ink	Ink is among class of combination stains. Hold under running water to remove as much ink as possible. Sponge the area around the stain with rubbing alcohol or hair spray or dry-cleaning solvent before applying direct on the stain. Place stain face down on clean paper towels. Apply alcohol or hairspray or dry-cleaning solvent to back of stain. Replace paper towels frequently. Rinse thoroughly. Launder. If stain persists, launder using sodium hypochlorite bleach, if safe for fabric, or oxygen bleach. Or presoak into a detergent containing enzymes.

7	Iodine	For fresh stains, flush with cold water from backside of the stain. Apply starch paste and let it to absorb the stain. Launder. or soak in a solution of one-quart cool water with ½ teaspoon of bleach-free liquid laundry detergent and one tablespoon of ammonia (never mix chlorine bleach with ammonia as the resulting fumes are hazardous). Launder. For old or persistent stains mix one tablespoon of sodium thiosulfate with one cup of cool water. Using a clean white cloth, sponge the stain with this solution. Rinse well and launder.
8	Mud	Let the stain dry. Brush off as much stain as possible or rinse under running water and let it soak overnight. For light stains, pretreat with a paste of powder detergent and water or liquid laundry detergent or a liquid detergent booster. Launder. For heavy stains, pretreat by presoaking with a laundry detergent or a product containing enzymes or a container of water with ¼ cup each of ammonia and light detergent. Rinse and launder well. Red clay can be rubbed with a paste of vinegar and table salt. Leave for 30 minutes, launder with hottest water safe for the fabric and/or apply a bleach safe for the fabric or flush with rubbing alcohol and machine wash. If a rust colored stain remains, treat with a rust remover.
9	Lipstick	Lipstick is among stains that require a combination of stain treatment techniques. Begin by carefully scrapping off any excess lipstick with a blunt knife or dull edge. Apply a pre-wash stain remover or small amount of liquid detergent directly to the stain. Spray the remover on both sides of the lipstick stain. Ensure that the remover is suitable for the fabric at hand by referencing the garment label. Rinse the stain in warm water, making sure not to rub as this can cause further damage. Dab the stain instead. Launder as usual. OR Dampen a white cloth/cotton ball with rubbing alcohol. Blot the stain with alcohol to remove the stain from linen. Do not rub the stain. Rinse out alcohol and launder. OR Spray with hairspray. Allow the hairspray to sit for up to 15 minutes. Dip a clean cloth in warm water and wipe the hairspray off the stain. Launder as usual. OR soften the stain by working glycerin into it. Apply methylated spirit or kerosene and launder.
10	Chewing gum	Apply ice to harden the stain. Remove excess surface gum with a blunt knife. Allow to soak in ice-cold water for a few minutes or treat with gel or aerosol pretreatment spray. Rub with heavy duty liquid detergent. Rinse with hot water. Launder. Repeat if necessary.
11	Shoe polish	Pretreat liquid shoe polish with a paste of dry detergent and water. Launder. For paste shoe polish, scrape off residue from fabric with a dull knife. Pretreat with a prewash stain remover or cleaning fluid, rinse. Rub detergent into dampened area. Launder using a bleach safe for fabric.

12	Medicines	Flush the stain from the back with cold water to run out as much stain as possible. Pretreat with an enzyme laundry product. Let it stand for several minutes. Rinse well with cold water. Launder. If stain persists, pretreat with a liquid enzyme detergent. Soak in cold water for at least 30 minutes, agitating the fabric occasionally. Launder using the warmest water and bleach safe for the fabric. OR Mix one tablespoon of distilled white vinegar with 2/3 cup of isopropyl or rubbing alcohol. Use a clean white cloth to sponge the stain with the solution, both the front and back sides of the fabric. Keep turning the white cloth to a clean area to blot away as much of the stain as possible. Rinse the stain again with cold water if no more color is transferring to the white cloth. Launder as recommended on the care label. Oxygen bleach if stain persists. Soak the garment for at least 6 hours or overnight. If the stain is gone, launder as usual. If slight traces remain, repeat the process with oxygen bleach and water solution.
13	Acne medicine	Many acne medications contain benzoyl peroxide which is a strong oxidizing and/or bleaching agent. It is capable of destroying most dyes. Spots may not appear for hours, days or months. Compounds containing benzoyl peroxide are not water soluble so are difficult to wash off. A stain may appear to have been washed off when it really has not. Some spots may appear slightly, rusty, pinkish or yellow, depending on dye, or blue. Some spots may appear slightly pinkish or white. Once a textile product has been chemically stained, there is nothing that can be done to restore the material to its original colour or condition.

CONCLUSION

Prompt and appropriate stain removal techniques ensure total stain removal from linen thus maintaining it in its good condition, prevents linen damage and turn over and prolongs its life span for cost effectiveness.

REFERENCE

- *Stain removal for washable fabrics by cooperative extension service of university of Kentucky-college of agriculture*

Prepared by: Ssemuyiga Denis

Approved by: Deo Ssekidde