



Infection Prevention in Outpatient Settings: Supplies That Matter Most

In outpatient clinics, infection prevention is both a clinical priority and an operational necessity. Unlike hospitals, physician practices and ambulatory centers often operate with leaner staff and faster patient turnover — making **efficient, consistent infection control practices** essential.

While protocols and training are critical, the **supplies you choose and how you manage them** can make or break your infection prevention strategy.

Here's a practical look at the **key supply categories that matter most** — and how clinics can optimize them for safety, efficiency, and cost control.

Why Infection Prevention Is Different in Outpatient Settings

Outpatient facilities face unique challenges:

- High patient volume with limited room turnover time
- Fewer dedicated infection prevention resources
- Broad mix of procedures (from routine exams to minor surgeries)
- Increased expectations for visible cleanliness and safety

This makes **standardization and supply readiness** especially important.

1. Surface Disinfectants & Cleaning Supplies

What matters most:

- EPA-approved disinfectants effective against common pathogens
- Fast contact times to support quick room turnover
- Compatibility with clinical surfaces and equipment

Common products:

- Disinfectant wipes
- Spray solutions
- Floor cleaners

Best practice:

Standardize to **1–2 approved disinfectants** across the clinic to reduce confusion and ensure proper use.

2. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Includes:

- Gloves
- Masks (procedure and surgical)
- Gowns
- Face shields / eye protection

What matters most:

- Proper sizing and availability at point of care
- Consistent quality across brands
- Reliable supply (to avoid substitutions mid-workflow)

Best practice:

Avoid overstocking but maintain **par levels** to prevent shortages during spikes in demand.

3. Hand Hygiene Products

Core supplies:

- Alcohol-based hand sanitizers
- Antimicrobial soaps
- Touchless dispensers

What matters most:

- Accessibility in every exam and procedure room
- Compliance with clinical guidelines
- Skin-friendly formulations to encourage frequent use

Best practice:

Place sanitizing stations at **all key workflow points** (entry, exam rooms, nurse stations).

4. Single-Use Disposable Products

Examples:

- Exam table paper
- Disposable drapes
- Syringe tips
- Speculums (in some settings)

What matters most:

- Reducing cross-contamination risk
- Balancing cost vs. convenience
- Ensuring consistent availability

Best practice:

Evaluate opportunities to replace reusable items with disposables **where infection risk is highest.**

5. Sharps Safety & Waste Disposal Supplies

Includes:

- Sharps containers
- Biohazard bags
- Regulated medical waste containers

What matters most:

- Proper sizing and placement
- Compliance with safety regulations
- Minimizing overfill risks

Best practice:

Right-size containers based on procedure volume to reduce both risk and unnecessary costs.

6. Point-of-Care Cleaning Accessories

Examples:

- Disposable wipes for equipment
- Probe covers (e.g., ultrasound)
- Keyboard and device covers

What matters most:

- Ease of use between patients
- Compatibility with devices
- Staff adherence

Best practice:

Keep cleaning supplies **within arm's reach** of all shared equipment.

Common Gaps That Lead to Infection Risk

Even well-run clinics can face challenges like:

- Inconsistent product use across providers
- Stockouts leading to substitutions
- Overcomplicated supply selection
- Lack of visibility into usage patterns

These issues increase variability — which is the enemy of effective infection prevention.

How a GPO Helps Strengthen Infection Prevention

A healthcare Group Purchasing Organization (GPO) can support outpatient clinics by bringing **structure and consistency** to infection control supply management.

Key advantages:

Standardization

Reduce variation by aligning on approved products across locations and providers.

Cost Control

Access pre-negotiated pricing on high-use items like PPE, disinfectants, and disposables.

Supply Reliability

Tap into vetted supplier networks to avoid disruptions.

Product Evaluation

Identify clinically equivalent, cost-effective alternatives without compromising safety.

Data & Utilization Insights

Track usage trends and identify opportunities to reduce waste or overuse.

Final Thoughts

Infection prevention in outpatient settings isn't just about protocols — it's about **execution at every patient interaction**.

The right supplies, properly managed, enable:

- Faster room turnover
- Safer patient care
- Better staff compliance

- Lower operational risk

By focusing on high-impact categories like disinfectants, PPE, sterilization supplies, and disposables, clinics can build a **reliable, scalable infection prevention strategy**.

And with the support of a GPO, that strategy becomes not only safer — but more cost-effective and sustainable over time.

Looking for infection prevention products? Visit the [NuEdge website](#) today to view a complete list of our suppliers.