

Stethoscope cleaning and decontamination – Disinfection hand-gels

“3M is aware that it has become common practice, particularly in Germany, for healthcare professionals to use hand gels and surface disinfection products to disinfect their stethoscopes.

Some of these products are known to cause damage to rubber and certain plastics, and our investigations have shown that they can cause damage to the diaphragm of 3M™ Littmann® Stethoscopes. We have discussed this with the manufacturers of some of the most frequently used hand sanitiser products, and they have confirmed that these products are not tested for use on the surfaces of medical devices and should not be used for this purpose.

3M recommends that only 70% alcohol is used for stethoscope disinfection.

- If your stethoscope needs to be disinfected, wipe with a 70% isopropyl alcohol solution.
- Do not immerse your stethoscope in any liquid, or subject it to any sterilization process.
- Keep your stethoscope away from extreme heat, cold, solvents and oils.
- Tunable diaphragms can be removed from the chestpiece and their surfaces wiped with alcohol or soapy water. Dry all parts thoroughly before reassembly.
- Eartips can be removed from the ear tubes for thorough cleaning. For safety, snap eartips firmly back onto the ribbed ends of the ear tubes.

Customers wishing to use other products should establish with the manufacturer whether they are suitable for use on their stethoscope.

Please be aware that the use of products which are not recommended for use on stethoscopes and which are known to damage the materials used in stethoscope manufacture will invalidate their stethoscope warranty.”



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