

Finger Nails - The Other Aspect of Hand Hygiene

Due to the following reasons artificial nails must not be worn: Increased scientific reports linking higher numbers of gram-negative microorganisms and fungi cultured from the fingertips of personnel wearing artificial nails compared to personnel with natural nails; and increased incidence of healthcare-acquired infections.

Artificial nails are substances or devices applied to natural nails to augment or enhance nails. They include but are not limited to bonding, tips, wrappings, tapes and inlays.

Artificial Nails must not be worn by staff in the following positions:

1. All surgical personnel
2. All staff involved in cleaning processes
3. All staff involved in food preparation
4. All direct patient caregivers
5. All staff who prepare products for patients.

Nails should be kept clean. Patient care providers and others listed above must keep their nails short (less than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long). Short is also defined as holding the hand palm up at eye level and not being able to see the nail extend beyond the fingertip. (*See Infection Control Policy ECU Health IC-02 Hand Hygiene*)

