

# IPC Recommendations for Selection of Thermometers used for Staff and Visitor COVID-19 Screening

**Note:** This Information Sheet was developed to provide IPC guidance on selection and cleaning of thermometers which may be used for staff and visitor health screening related to the current restrictions in place for entry to healthcare facilities.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this Information Sheet contact Infection Prevention & Control at [ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca](mailto:ipcsurvstdadmin@ahs.ca).

## Recommended practice for selecting thermometers which may be used for staff and visitor screening during the COVID-19 pandemic

### 1. Issue

- 1.1 All staff and visitors entering healthcare facilities will be screened for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, which may include a temperature check.
- 1.2 Large numbers of people require screening at shift change in an efficient and safe manner.

### 2. IPC key messages for selection of thermometers

2.1 **Preferred choice:** a no-touch, clinical-grade quality infra-red thermometer as it does not require direct contact with the skin. These devices will lend to efficiency, expediency and the least risk of cross-contamination.

2.2 **Acceptable choice:** A temporal (which has a hard plastic head) or tympanic thermometer (with a disposable cover) that contacts the intact skin of the forehead and side of face/neck. The thermometer must be cleaned and disinfected between use on each person.

For the tympanic thermometer with disposable covers:

- remove and discard the tip cover after each use, before cleaning and disinfection;
- attach a new tip cover for each person.

2.3 **Last choice:**

- Single-use disposable thermometers (e.g., Tempa-dot) is acceptable from an IPC perspective (axillary preferred, oral only if the health care worker can read and report their own temperature).

2.4 **Not Recommended:**

- Rectal thermometers.
- Reusable oral thermometers.

### 3. Cleaning

3.1 Follow product-specific manufacturer's instruction for use (MIFU) for cleaning.

3.2 Parts of thermometers that contact the person must be cleaned between each use. Do not disinfect the thermometer lens.

3.3 Wipe the exterior of the thermometer with an AHS approved disinfectant wipe at each screener shift change, or if it becomes contaminated).

3.4 When a single-use disposable tip / cover is used, it must be discarded between each use and not used on multiple people.