

How Are Germs Carried Through Water?

Biofilm

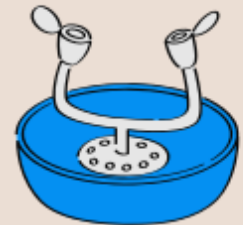
A collection of microorganisms that stick in moist environments. Can grow in drains often difficult to remove.

Splash Zone

The area around a sink or other drain in which contamination could occur to objects or people within that space.

Opportunistic plumbing pathogens:

- *Pseudomonas* species
- *Serratia* species
- Non-tuberculosis mycobacterium



Prefer stagnant water, which is easier to establish themselves, multiply, and spread throughout other parts of the system.

**Patients Most At Risk
Are Those With:**

Compromised immune systems, comorbidities and admission to high acuity units.

Prevention Strategies for Healthcare Facilities

List of Strategies for Frontline Workers vs. Ancillary Service Staff

Frontline Healthcare Workers



Clean and disinfect sink basins, faucets, splash guards, faucet handles, and surrounding countertops at least daily.

Keep patient care and personal items away from sinks.



Discard patient waste in toilets.



Avoid pouring liquid supplements into sinks / toilets.



Avoid preparing medication near patient sink or patient area.

Environmental & Facilities Maintenance Staff



NJDOH recommends to flush low-flow water sources at minimum twice per week to maintain water quality parameters within control limits.

Monitor and regulate water pressure to reduce splashing.



Maintain water quality at all sinks and other water fixtures throughout the building water system.



Install splash guards on sinks next to preparation areas. Clean and disinfect splash guards daily using an EPA-registered disinfectant.



Conduct a risk assessment before any construction activity to consider ways patients may be exposed to waterborne pathogens.