

The Case for Switching from Disposable to Reusable Medical Apparel

AN EBOOK FROM
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Foreward

For decades, healthcare professionals have researched and debated the benefits of reusable medical apparel and linens over disposable products. Today, many experts agree that reusing medical textiles is the optimal method. Some of the primary benefits of reusing medical gowns, linens, and other textiles include maintaining a base level of PPE during conventional and crisis capacity times, improving patient and staff satisfaction, enhancing environmental quality, reducing waste, and controlling costs.

Read this eBook for a comprehensive case about switching from disposable to reusable medical apparel and linens in your healthcare setting.

What's Inside

Use the contents of this eBook to learn all the benefits of switching from disposable medical apparel and supplies to reusable textiles. The information presented here will help you understand your inventory options so you can make smarter and more informed decisions for your practice, patients, and staff.

Discover the data that makes the case for switching from disposable to reusable medical apparel:

Maintain Critical Supply Levels

Increase Protection & Performance

Improve Provider Satisfaction

Decrease Your Carbon Footprint

Control Your Inventory Costs

Summary of Key Takeaways

Switch to Reusable Products

Maintain Critical Supply Levels

Reusable healthcare supplies like patient gowns and medical apparel guarantee a base level of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) during capacity surges and supply shortages. As long as reusable healthcare textiles are laundered according to HLAC standards and per the healthcare setting's SOP, these supplies can be used over and over again, providing relief during crisis capacity times.

Most healthcare facilities experienced tremendous supply shortages during the onset of COVID-19 when demand for PPE outpaced the supply available. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends that healthcare centers implement the use of reusable (washable or cloth) gowns instead of disposable single-use gowns, which are to be discarded after use. This recommendation is part of the FDA's conventional capacity strategy, which ensures supply levels are adequate.

BY SWITCHING FROM DISPOSABLE TO REUSABLE MEDICAL TEXTILES, YOU CAN FEEL CONFIDENT THAT YOUR PROVIDERS AND PATIENTS ALWAYS HAVE THE SUPPLIES THEY NEED, EVEN DURING CAPACITY CRISIS TIMES.





Increase Protection & Performance

Medical textiles are essential to safe and effective care that reduces the spread of microorganisms and bodily fluids. When deciding between disposable or reusable medical apparel, performance and protection have to be among the key criteria you consider.

In a recent comparison study published by the National Center for Biotechnology Information as a result of COVID-19, research evaluated the performance of disposable versus reusable medical gowns by assessing their ability to provide adequate protection across their expected service lifespan.

Level I and II disposable gowns did not meet Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation® (AAMI) performance specifications for impact penetration water resistance.

All three levels of disposable gowns also failed to meet the American Society for Testing and Materials performance requirements for breaking strength in the crosswise direction.

THE STUDY CONCLUDED THAT THE ADOPTION OF REUSABLE GOWNS MAY RESULT IN INCREASED PROTECTION AND COST SAVINGS DUE TO THEIR SUPERIOR DURABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY WHEN COMPARED TO DISPOSABLE GOWNS.

Improve Provider Satisfaction

Ensuring patient and provider satisfaction in your healthcare facility is more important than ever now that patient satisfaction is tied directly to Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement for facilities. Patient satisfaction scores are determined by a Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey that measures:

- » Communication with doctors and nurses
- » Responsiveness of hospital staff
- » Pain management
- » Communication about medicines
- » Discharge information
- » Transition of care
- » Quietness and cleanliness of the hospital environment

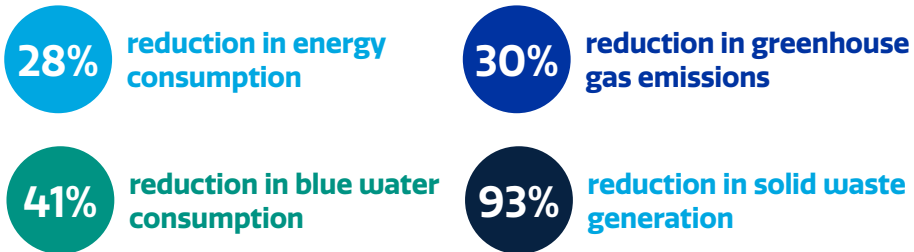
Many of these factors can be improved by ensuring your providers have everything they need—and providing them with cloth medical apparel and linens instead of paper is one way to improve comfort, breathability, and flexibility throughout the day.

REUSABLE MEDICAL APPAREL OFFERS GREATER COMFORT, BREATHABILITY, AND FLEXIBILITY FOR PROVIDERS, INCREASING THEIR OVERALL SATISFACTION LEVELS AND INTERACTIONS WITH PATIENTS.



Decrease Your Carbon Footprint

Environmental sustainability is an obvious benefit of choosing reusable medical textiles over disposable gowns and supplies. According to a comparison study from the American Journal of Infection Control, the environmental impacts of isolation gowns alone are significant. The study compared 1,000 isolation gown uses in a healthcare setting, including their manufacture, use, and end-of-life stages. At the healthcare facility, compared to the disposable gown system, **the reusable gown system showed:**



THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY INDICATE THAT BY SELECTING REUSABLE ISOLATION GOWNS, HEALTHCARE FACILITIES CAN ADD THESE QUANTITATIVE BENEFITS DIRECTLY TO THEIR SUSTAINABILITY SCORECARDS.



Control Your Inventory Costs

Inventory and supplies are a major cost incurred by healthcare organizations. Outpatient facilities spend 20% of their revenue on supplies¹ while larger hospitals and health systems can spend up to one-third of their total operating expenses on supplies and supply chain expenses, which can be millions of dollars.

Prior to COVID-19, a 2020 article from the Journal of the American Medical Association examined the waste practices of hospitals, urging them to be minimized wherever possible. It identified that the U.S. health sector spent approximately \$5.9 billion on medical waste management in 2014 alone. To combat this and create financial sustainability, healthcare centers must establish a 'reduce and reuse' culture.

THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION URGES HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS TO ADOPT A “REDUCE AND REUSE” CULTURE TO CONTROL INVENTORY COSTS AND SUPPORT FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY.

REAL STORY: A case study² detailed the outcomes of a 30-plus hospital system staying with reusable products rather than switching to single-use, disposable isolation gowns. The hospital system saved at least \$1.4 million a year, recognizing that **single-use isolation gowns cost 25% to 50% more than reusable gowns**. Beyond savings on the gowns, this system also saved on annual disposal expenses.

Case Closed!

From maintaining supplies, increasing performance, and improving provider satisfaction to elevating the patient experience, decreasing your carbon footprint, and controlling inventory costs—the reasons to switch from disposable to reusable medical apparel are abundant and clear.

Reusable versus disposable medical apparel lets you:

- » Maintain critical supply levels during crisis capacity times
- » Ensure optimal performance protection for staff and patients
- » Improve your sustainability scorecard with quantitative data
- » Increase provider satisfaction and interactions with patients
- » Control inventory costs without decreasing patient encounters
- » Focus on provider satisfaction to increase patient satisfaction
- » Consider premium patient gowns and robes for your patients

Switch to Reusable Products

We know change can be difficult. But when that change brings significant benefits to your clinicians, staff, patients, and bottom line—especially during uncertain times like these—we hope you can agree that this change will be worth it. One of the best ways to introduce this change into your outpatient center is to start educating your team on the benefits of reusable medical apparel and medical textiles. To start, share this eBook with them!

NEXT, CONTACT NIXON MEDICAL FOR A REUSABLE COST-SAVINGS ASSESSMENT. WE WILL REVIEW YOUR CURRENT DISPOSABLE INVENTORY, USAGE, AND PATIENT ENCOUNTERS TO SEE HOW WE CAN OPTIMIZE YOUR COSTS.

Find out how to contact us for a free and no-obligation assessment on the next page.

About Nixon Medical

Nixon Medical is a leading service provider of medical linens and apparel serving outpatient healthcare centers nationwide. We provide trusted medical apparel and linen rental services, HLAC-accredited laundering services, expert inventory management, and custom and reliable service.

Ready to ditch disposable medical textiles for reusable medical apparel and linens?

Contact us for a Reusable Cost-Savings Assessment or a quote on medical apparel and linens.

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Sources

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