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## Macerator Use Procedure

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### 1. Guiding Principles

This procedure is to be used in conjunction with the WA Health:

- [Use of Macerator machines for managing disposal of body waste in health care establishments](#)
- [Clinical and related waste management: General requirements](#)

and the:

- [Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare \(2010\).](#)

The macerator waste disposal system is an alternative option to thermal pan sanitisers and chemical disinfection tanks for the safe disposal of body fluids/waste in the health care setting. It eliminates the need to process equipment such as bedpans and urinals in thermal pan sanitisers.

### 2. Procedure

This procedure relates to all hospital staff and volunteers who are disposing of human waste in the macerators.

#### 2.1 Operation

1. Open the lid by inserting foot into the foot well (light beam will detect your foot and shoe icon appears on LCD). Check no foreign items are wrapped around blades
2. Put a maximum of four (4) disposable **pulp products** or two (2) wash bowls and their contents into the drum.
3. 'Press and Go' – For infection control purposes use the machine after each loading. Do not wait for the drum to contain the maximum quantity before switching on; use the macerator like a toilet.
4. Close the lid.
5. Push the start button – the display will indicate cycle running and the action of the machine will be audible; operation will commence a moment after pressing the start button.
6. End of cycle is shown on the LCD and the lid can be opened by inserting the foot into the foot well.

**Note:** For optimum efficiency of the Vortex, the supplier recommends that only Vernacare pulp disposable products and Vernacare Macerator Deodoriser be used.

### 2.2 Rules

**DO** run a cleansing cycle once a day without product. (Only advised if unit doesn't use deodorizer – however if unit had not been run for the day, then perform cleaning cycle).

**DON'T** exceed four (4) pulp products or two (2) wash bowls per loading.

**DON'T** allow pulp products to “nest” inside one another inside the drum

**DON'T** put non-maceratable wipes; dressings; plastic containers; incontinence pads; metal objects; cotton wool; sanitary or paper towels; plastic gloves and aprons; syringes or any other non-maceratable/flushable items into the machine.

### 2.3 Care and Maintenance

#### Daily Routine

1. Run a daily cleansing cycle without product.
2. Wipe down external surfaces with hard surface detergent.
3. Clean and dry the opening handle thoroughly using detergent, warm water and a disposable cloth.
4. Wipe over the control panels with a damp (not wet) cloth and dry. NB. Drying each surface after cleaning is vitally important to help prevent microbial growth.
5. Keeping the lid closed, continue to wipe the top surface with warm water and detergent then dry with a disposable cloth.
6. Open the lid; clean the rim of the macerator and the lid seal using warm water and detergent, then dispose of the cloth.
7. Do not clean the inside of the machine beyond the rim.

**Note:** If disinfection is required, refer to the [WACHS Infection Prevention and Control - Policy](#). It is recommended to use powder free examination gloves for general cleaning tasks. A plastic apron is to be used to prevent soiling of uniform.

### 2.4 Problem Solving

By following the guidelines in the user manual [VernaCare manufacturer's manual and information sheets](#) you will experience trouble-free service.

However, you may occasionally experience minor problems such as:

#### **Pulp particles in the bottom of the drum**

Run a cleansing cycle without pulp products, and then ensure that no more than four (4) pulp products are put into the machine at any one time.

**Pulp particles remain on the lid**

Call the Maintenance Department. The air vent may be blocked and it only takes a few minutes to clear.

**The LCD displays 'BLOCKED' and the machine will not start**

The output drain port may be blocked or a foreign object is blocking the blades. To free it, pour a mixture of hot soapy water into the drum and wait for a few minutes. Try to run a cleansing cycle. If the blockage persists, call the Maintenance Department.

**The LCD displays 'LOW WATER' and the machine will not start**

The water supply could be low. **Check that the water tap and RPZ valve is on** leave the machine for four (4) minutes and try again to start it. If the warning persists, call the Maintenance Department. (Holding the start button down will override this warning).

**The LCD displays **

The deodoriser supply could be low. Please order Vernacare macerator deodoriser from Ebos, if necessary. Please note that the Vortex macerator will function effectively without the deodoriser but the tank must always contain some fluid deodoriser **or** water.

**IMPORTANT**

**If any of the following problems occur call the Maintenance Department immediately:**

- Water is coming up through the lid.
- The lid will not open.
- The LCD display shows 'Error'.

The LCD display shows the machine running but the machine is not working

**2.5 Contingency Plan**

**In the event of macerator failure:**

- Notify maintenance by EWAMS and phone.
- Put one sachet of Vernagel Super absorbent Powder in the disposable bedpan or urinal prior to use. This is to prevent spillages and leaks by solidifying liquids.
- Cover used item with bedpan cover.
- **Do not empty contents into sluice.**
- Place disposable bedpan / urinal in a leak proof container (preferable with a lid).
- Take container with used item to nearest department that has a functional macerator and dispose of items.
- Return plastic container (used for transporting used items) to the originating department.
- Place plastic container in utensil washer and start wash cycle.

See Appendix 1 - [Great Southern Macerator Locations](#)

### 3. Definitions

<b>Macerator</b>	A device used to breakdown waste into a slurry form so that it can be pumped against gravity into a holding tank or other sewage system.
<b>Running</b>	The machine has been started and is running through its cycle.
<b>End</b>	The machine has finished the cycle and is ready to open.
<b>Blocked blades</b>	Indicates blades are blocked. Machine will stop running and lock!
<b>Low water</b>	Indicates insufficient water for cycle to commence. Please check water tap and RPZ valve, wait a short time to allow water tank to fill then press start button again.
<b>Error</b>	The cycle has stopped due to a fault condition. See manual and contact maintenance.
<b>PPE</b>	Personal Protective Equipment.

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for ensuring that only Vernacare pulp products, toilet paper and human waste are placed in the macerators.

All staff apply standard precautions when handling blood or body fluids and wear appropriate PPE.

The rostered Afternoon Patient Services Assistant is responsible for completing the daily cleansing cycle see **2.3 Care and Maintenance**

Only maintenance staff are permitted to insert their hands into the drum after switching off the power at the wall or removing the covers of the macerator.

### 5. Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may constitute a breach of the WA Health Code of Conduct (Code). The Code is part of the [Employment Policy Framework](#) issued pursuant to section 26 of the [Health Services Act 2016](#) (HSA) and is binding on all WACHS staff which for this purpose includes trainees, students, volunteers, researchers, contractors for service (including all visiting health professionals and agency staff) and persons delivering training or education within WACHS.

WACHS staff are reminded that compliance with all policies is mandatory.

### 6. Evaluation

Regular maintenance checks are to be carried out by maintenance staff and an annual summary of variations is to be reported to the Operations Committee.

## 7. References

[VernaCare manufacturer's manual and information sheets.](#)

## 8. Related Policy Documents

[WACHS Infection Prevention and Control - Policy](#)

[Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare \(2010\).](#)

## 9. Related Policies

[Clinical and Related Waste Management Policy](#)

[Use of Macerator Machines For Managing Disposal of Body Waste in Western Australian Healthcare Facilities](#)

## 10. Appendices

Appendix 1 - [WACHS Great Southern Macerator Locations](#)

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on request for a person with a disability**

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**Appendix 1 - WACHS Great Southern Macerator Locations**

**Albany Health Campus**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Area</b>
Ambulatory Care	Chemotherapy
Ambulatory Care	Dialysis
Ambulatory Care	Specialist Rooms
Critical Care	Emergency Department
Critical Care	High Dependency Unit
Medical Imaging	Great Southern Radiology
Hospital Inpatient	Maternity Ward
Hospital Inpatient	Birth Suite
Hospital Inpatient	Medical & Paediatric Ward
Hospital Inpatient	Mental Health Ward
Hospital Inpatient	Surgical Ward
Hospital Inpatient	Surgical Services - DOSA
Hospital Inpatient	Sub-Acute Care Ward

**Regional MPS**

<b>Regional Site</b>	<b>Area</b>
Denmark	Acute; dirty utility
Denmark	Blue Wren Lodge; dirty utility
Katanning	Ambulatory Care
Katanning	Emergency Department
Katanning	General Ward
Katanning	Theatre/CSSD
Plantagenet	East Wing Acute; dirty utility
Ravensthorpe	Acute; dirty utility

Correct as at 20/02/2017