

Type of evidence	Initial grade	Criteria to decrease grade	Criteria to increase grade	Overall quality grade
RCT	High	<u>Quality</u> Serious (-1) or very serious (-2) limitation to study quality <u>Consistency</u> Important inconsistency (-1)	<u>Quality</u> Observational study adjusted for all plausible confounders (+1) <u>Consistency</u> Strong evidence of association from > 1 study (+1)	High
				Moderate
Observational study	Low	<u>Directness</u> Some (-1) or major (-2) uncertainty about directness	<u>Directness</u> Strong evidence of association based on direct evidence (+2)	Low
Any other evidence	Very low			Very Low

Overall Quality Grades

- High
 - further research is very unlikely to change confidence in the estimate of effect
- Moderate
 - further research is likely to impact confidence in the estimate of effect and may change the estimate
- Low
 - further research is very likely to impact confidence in the estimate of effect and is likely to change the estimate
- Very low
 - any estimate of effect is very uncertain

TABLE 1. Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee categorization scheme for recommendations*

Category IA	Strongly recommended for implementation and supported by well-designed experimental, clinical, or epidemiologic studies.
Category IB	Strongly recommended for implementation and supported by certain experimental, clinical, or epidemiologic studies and a strong theoretic rationale.
Category IC	Required for implementation, as mandated by federal or state regulation or standard.
Category II	Suggested for implementation and supported by suggestive clinical or epidemiologic studies or a theoretic rationale.
No recommendation	Unresolved issue; practices for which insufficient evidence or no consensus regarding efficacy exist.

***Categorized on the basis of existing scientific data, theoretic rationale, applicability, and economic impact**

GRADE		HICPAC	
Recommendation	Quality of Evidence	Recommendation	Quality of Evidence
STRONG	Net Benefits	IA - High IB - Moderate IC – High to Very Low	Very Low to High Quality Evidence
	Net Harms		
	Moderate to High Quality Evidence		
WEAK	Trade-offs Low to High Quality Evidence	II – Low to Very Low	Very Low to Low Quality Evidence
Recommendation for further research	Uncertain Trade-offs Very Low to Low Quality Evidence	No Recommendation / Unresolved Issue	Very Low Quality Evidence

Category/Grade	Definition
Strength of Recommendation	
A	Good evidence to support a recommendation for use.
B	Moderate evidence to support a recommendation for use.
C	Poor evidence to support a recommendation.
Quality of Evidence	
I	Evidence from ≥ 1 properly randomized, controlled trial.
II	Evidence from ≥ 1 well-designed clinical trial, without randomization; from cohort or case-controlled analytic studies (preferably from >1 center); from multiple time-series; or from dramatic results from uncontrolled experiments.
III	Evidence from opinions of respected authorities, based on clinical experience, descriptive studies, or reports of expert committees.

Table adapted from Canadian Task Force on the Periodic Health Examination.