

Table 14.1 Personnel decontamination*

Method ^a	Surface	Action	Technique	Advantages	Disadvantages
Soap and water	Skin and hands	Emulsifies and discharges contaminants.	Wash 2-3 minutes and monitor. Do not wash more than 3-4 times.	Readily available and effective for most radioactive contamination.	Continued washing will irritate the skin. Ineffective washing of other than affected parts may spread contamination.
Soap and water	Hair	Same as above.	Wash several times. If contamination is not lowered to acceptable levels, shave the head and apply skin decontamination method.		
Leave soap, soft brush, and water	Skin and hands	Emulsifies, discharges, and erodes	Use light pressure with heavy leather. Wash for 2 minutes, three times. Rinse and monitor. Use care not to scratch or erode the skin. Apply lanolin or hand cream to prevent chapping.	Same as above.	Continued washing will abrade the skin.
Tide or other detergent (plain)	Same as above.	Same as above.	Make into a paste. Use with additional water with a mild scrubbing action. Use care not to erode the skin.	Slightly more effective than washing with soap.	Will irritate and abrade the skin. Must be used with care.
Mixture of 50% Tide and 50% cornmeal.	Skin and hands	Emulsifies, discharges, and erodes.	Make into a paste. Use with additional water with a mild scrubbing action. Use care not to erode the skin.	Same as above.	Same as above.
5% water solution of a mixture of 30% Tide, 65% Calgon, 5% Carbocel (carboxymethyl cellulose)	Same as above.	Same as above.	Use with water. Rub for a minute and rinse.	Same as above.	Same as above.

144

*Modified from "Radiological Health Handbook," PB-230 646, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Rockville, MD 20852, Revised edition, January 1970.

^aBegin with method listed and then proceed step by step to the more severe methods, as necessary.

Table 14.1 Personnel decontamination*

Method	Surface	Action	Technique	Advantages	Disadvantages
Flushing	Eyes, ears, nose, and mouth	Physical removal by flushing.	Roll back the eyelid as far as possible, flush with large amounts of water. If isotonic irrigants are available, obtain them without delay. Apply to eye continually and then flush with large amounts of water. (isotonic irrigant [0.9% NaCl solution]: 9 grams NaCl in beaker, fill to 1000 cc with water.) Can be purchased from drug suppliers, etc. Further decontamination should be done under medical supervision.	If used immediately will remove contamination. May also be used for ears, nose, and throat.	When using for nose and mouth, contaminated individual should be warned not to swallow the rinse.
Flushing	Wounds	Physical removal by flushing	Wash wound with large amounts of water and spread edges to stimulate bleeding. If not profuse. If profuse, stop bleeding first, clean edges of wound, bandage, and if any contamination remains, it may be removed by normal cleaning methods, as above.	Quick and efficient if wound not severe.	May spread contamination to other areas of body if not done carefully.
Sweating	Skin of hands and feet	Physical removal by sweating	Place hand or foot in plastic glove or boot. Tape shut. Place near source of heat for 10-15 minutes or until hand or foot is sweating profusely. Remove glove and then wash using standard technique. Gloves can be worn for several hours using only body heat.	Cleansing action is from leeching out. Hand does not dry out.	If glove or boot is not removed shortly after profuse sweating starts and part immediately washed with soap and water, contamination may seep into the pores.