

Based on industry experience and using our diverse team of Infection Prevention, Facilities, Environmental Services, and Safety experts, Parkview has put together this summary document of surfaces and cleaning. If you have additional questions, you can contact ParkviewBusinessConnect@parkview.com and ask for Sarah Epple, Parkview Interior Designer.

Your organization will have to make individual choices as to what feels safe for their environment. The information below summarizes materials that are often used in upholstery. The technology of most of these products can be significantly more involved than this and therefore varieties of each product can perform differently. Also, each organization can be using different cleaners. If you do not know the textile that was used on a piece of furniture, it can be difficult to know which are which. As you consider product options, remember that there is no perfect solution or material. Each one has an appropriate application and you'll want to consider the situation and use.

Woven textiles (fabrics)

These are woven and made of a variety of yarns. Some may be bleach cleanable. Some are water or solution cleanable. (You'd have to get that from the manufacturer of the textile.) Parkview usually only has these in individual task chairs or private office seating in corporate environments. Outside of task seating, we don't usually have any in hospitals. Ours are all commercial fabrics also because of fire codes. We don't use residential upholstery since it isn't tested to the same levels.

Cryptons

Cryptons look and feel like woven textiles. It has been available since 1993. This is a technology that is in the yarn, not applied to the fabric after it is woven. Cryptons resist penetration of the yarn itself. It is woven though so liquids can still go through it. Most liquids would sit on top for a time before they penetrate to the foam. Because of this, it is used often in restaurant and hospitality industries also. Some Cryptons are backed to prevent that penetration. In healthcare, we use it in public spaces for the look and feel of woven textiles. Infection Prevention and Environmental Services have approved it to continue to be used in this way even in today's environment. They are disinfecting it just like vinyls.

Vinyls

100% Vinyls have historically been the product used in healthcare in patient care areas. It is not woven so everything stays on top and can just be wiped off the surface. In our experience over time, especially in areas that are sanitized often, it will dry out and crack, breaking through that wipeable surface. With COVID-19, we have an expectation that this will happen in other areas also especially if spaces are cleaned after every use. Vinyls are still highly recommended but the end-user needs to be prepared for a higher replacement rate. This could be true of any of the upholsteries.

Polyurethane

These look like vinyl although it typically has a softer hand and is considered a green product, so it has been promoted as the replacement for vinyl. Historically, these have failed in most

healthcare environments because over a period of 2-5 years it appears to “melt” under the use of disinfectants. The manufacturers have started to reformulate them for that not to happen. However, there has not been enough time to understand if the reformulation has worked. This is still a very cleanable product but there should be awareness that this could happen, and replacement will be necessary.

Silicone

New to the industry is silicone upholstery. It typically has a 100% silicone top layer, like what would be used for baking in a kitchen. It has a great, soft hand and is quickly gaining ground in the industry. Parkview started using it when it first became available 4-5 years ago in a very intense environment that gets sanitized many times a day. It has outperformed anything else that we have used. It can be cleaned easily, like vinyl, but has not cracked under cleaning (so far). It has been hard to use because it hasn't been very readily available for all upholstery but that has been changing rapidly each year. Infection Prevention and Environmental Services are ok with its use in all our applications. It is our current top choice of product, but it is still fairly expensive. That cost might be worth it though if it lasts longer.

NOTES:

- If you don't know what the upholstery is, wipeable surfaces should be very cleanable.
- All upholstery materials will probably fail faster under disinfectants being used on them often.
- Woods, paints on metals and sometimes laminates also start breaking down faster and needing replaced sooner.
- If you start using new products, try in small quantities and see how it performs over time so that large number of items don't need to be replaced at once if they would fail, which could be quite costly.