

New Article in *CardioPulse* Reveals a Case of Probable Patient-to-Provider COVID-19 Transmission in the Clinical Setting

- The stethoscope, while offering profound clinical utility, may have served as a vector for COVID-19 virus transmission.
- The AseptiScope™ DiskCover™ System, a new and innovative touch-free diaphragm barrier dispenser, offers a ray of hope for stethoscope hygiene and infection protection.

October 14, 2020 San Diego, CA – A new *CardioPulse* article¹ entitled “The Stethoscope: A Potential Vector for COVID-19” discusses a probable case of stethoscope-related COVID-19 virus transmission from a known COVID-19 positive patient to a cardiology resident. The resident, in full personal protective equipment, suspects that she was infected after examining an infected patient and subsequently placing the infected stethoscope inside her protective gown. The resident later developed symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19. She has since fully recovered and returned to normal clinical duties.

“The stethoscope serves a multi-faceted role in the diagnosis and care of patients, even in the COVID-19 era,” said Dr. Alan Maisel, a co-author of the article and co-founder of AseptiScope™, Inc. *“That said, we recognize the ever-growing body of evidence establishing the stethoscope as a culprit in the transmission of infection, now including COVID-19,”* he added.

The authors point out that pathogens found on clinicians’ hands are also present on their “third hand,” the stethoscope, and in similar volume and diversity. However, unlike well-established hand hygiene protocols, current stethoscope hygiene guidelines do not adequately reflect the risks posed by stethoscope contamination. Moreover, multiple recent direct observational studies have documented consistently low levels of clinician compliance to stethoscope hygiene guidelines and recommended cleaning methods. The authors go on to state that, while guidelines advise against using personal stethoscopes in contact precaution settings, single-patient disposable stethoscopes offer impaired sound quality and do not prevent clinician-to-clinician infection transmission.

Technological innovation is bringing “a ray of hope” to stethoscope hygiene. In particular, the authors highlight the DiskCover™ System, a promising new solution developed by AseptiScope, which delivers single-use stethoscope diaphragm barriers in a touch-free fashion. By creating an aseptic surface for patient examinations², the barrier protects against pathogen transmission while maintaining high quality acoustics.

“The rapid and reliable application of single-use aseptic stethoscope barriers at the point of care is emerging as the first practical solution to the long-standing challenge of stethoscope hygiene,” said Scott Mader, CEO and co-founder of AseptiScope. *“With the upcoming launch of our touch-free DiskCover System, healthcare providers will be able to safely use their most frequently employed medical device, the stethoscope, at a time when infection control is paramount.”*

References:

1. European Heart Journal, Volume 41, Issue 36, 21 September 2020, Pages 3393–3395, <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurheartj/ehaa657>
2. Vasudevan R, et al. Mayo Clin Proc Innov Qual Outcomes. 2020;4(1):21-30. Published 2020 Feb 5. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7010972/>

About AseptiScope, Inc.

AseptiScope, formed in early 2016, is a privately funded San Diego, California based, clinical innovation company. The company is founded and led by clinical innovation experts, leading medical researchers and practicing physicians.

The AseptiScope mission is to design, develop, manufacture and commercialize novel solutions that ensure “Infection Protection for Clinician & Patient.” The company will introduce the first true and practical solution for the longstanding challenge of stethoscope contamination in autumn of 2020: The DiskCover System™. Visit www.aseptiscope.com for more information.

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