

# Patient safety alert

Number 2020-04  
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## Potential shortages of ear thermometers

At least 15 Braun ThermoScan PRO 6000 Ear Thermometers (supplied by Welch Allyn) have recently failed calibration checks and have been withdrawn from use. Replacements will not be available for at least three months.

We are investigating the reasons why there has been an increasing spate of failures of tympanic thermometers. It is possible that they have not been handled appropriately e.g. accidentally knocked or incorrectly cleaned.

**Due to the potential shortages:** For ear thermometers in circulation, please take as much care as possible whilst using them and clean in accordance with the following instructions.



### Cleaning the probe

- 1) Gently wipe the probe tip with a sani-cloth 70% alcohol wipe. Only use gentle pressure. Gently wipe dry probe tip with a paper towel to remove residue.
- 2) With probe tip facing down, wipe the probe walls with a sani-cloth 70% alcohol wipe. Gently wipe dry probe tip with a paper towel to remove residue.
- 3) Allow at least 5 minutes drying time before taking temperature. Make sure probe tip is clean. Ensure a new disposable cap is fitted prior to taking temperature for hygiene purposes and to prevent ear wax contamination of the probe.

### Cleaning the body and cradle

- 1) Only use approved cleaning solutions (sani-cloth 70% alcohol wipe)
- 2) Use a sani-cloth 70% alcohol wipe to clean the body and the cradle, ensure that the wipe is moist, not saturated. Wipe the body with the display facing down. Gently wipe dry with a paper towel to remove residue.



### Dos and don'ts

Never insert the thermometer into a patient's ear without fitting a new disposable cap. All visible contaminants must be removed using a damp detergent wipe, dried and then cleaned with the alcohol wipe. The thermometer must always be cleaned between patients.

### Safety checks

Ear thermometers require calibration on a yearly basis by EBME. Check that the displayed test sticker is in date. If the test sticker is missing or the date indicates it is due for its calibration and safety checks, contact EBME on 01271 322766 (ext 2766).

### EAR THERMOMETER URGENT ACTION

- 1) Handle our remaining ear thermometers with care.
- 2) Clean and use in accordance with instructions in this alert.
- 3) Ensure thermometers have been calibrated and safety checked by EBME in the past year.

Further information can be provide by the Patient Safety Team on 01271 349595 (ext 3382)