

Carpet vs. Hard Surfaces in Healthcare



Why Carpet?

Though some have considered hard surface the only choice for healthcare, in reality soft surfaces offer many performance and design advantages over hard surface.

Indoor Air Quality and Use of an Antimicrobial

Carpet helps control airborne allergens and microscopic particles by trapping them until vacuumed, and its antimicrobial compound inhibits the growth of bacteria and fungi. Hard surfaces allow dust and allergens to recirculate and remain airborne.

Shaw Contract Group products designed for healthcare applications contain "Florsept" antimicrobial protection. Each of these products meet the requirements of AATCC-174 which is the industry standard for antimicrobial in floorcovering. Florsept antimicrobial is added to the backing which makes it an integral and permanent part of the backing material. Because Florsept is not a topical application, the protection will not "walk off" or be removed during hot-water extraction cleaning methods.

By preventing the growth of microorganisms, including fungi such as mold, mildew, yeast, and both Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacterial, Florsept creates a more hygienic environment (IAQ) and reduces the odors associated with microorganisms. Shaw Contract Group backings containing Florsept include: EcoWorx, EcoWorx 6, TekLoc, UltraLoc and UltraLoc MP.

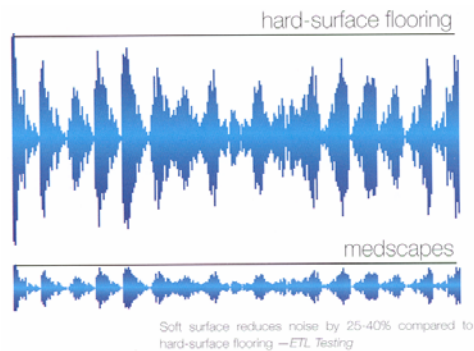
Safety

During a typical year, falls account for more than one million injuries in the U.S. alone (Barret C. Miller study). A major problem with hard-surface flooring is "hydro-dynamic squeeze film", a phenomenon similar to automobile hydroplaning. When hard-surface flooring is wet, slippery "fluid film" can become trapped under shoes, easily causing a fall.



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The higher tactile traction of carpet does not allow fluid to be trapped underfoot, making it much safer than hard-surface flooring. And when a fall does occur, the cushioning softens the impact, reducing the risk of injury – a real value in today's litigious world.



Noise Reduction

Carpet is a super sound-absorber, ten times more efficient in airborne noise reduction than any other floor covering, creating a more pleasing atmosphere for patients. In fact, according to research by The Picker Institute, excessive noise is one the most often cited complaints received from patients.

Carpet reduces ambient and high-frequency noise by as much as 25% – 40% compared to hard-surface flooring, creating a more pleasing atmosphere for patients, visitors, and healthcare professionals.

Ergonomics/ Comfort

Healthcare professionals spend up to 80% of the day standing or walking, making ergonomics critical. When compared with hard-surface flooring, working on carpet reduces leg fatigue.

Lower Maintenance Cost

Comparing the cost of maintenance for different floor covering helps give a true perspective of what can be expected with each type of floor covering and what each will cost. Carpet is less expensive to maintain than hard-surface flooring, when both are maintained properly.

Carpet has the advantage because of its construction. Carpet's textile surface holds dirt and dust particles until they are vacuumed. Hard-surface flooring cannot trap the dust and must be swept or wet-mopped almost daily to keep the room clean. Wet spots must be attended to immediately to avoid a hazard. Even though carpet in high-traffic areas should be vacuumed daily, it is usually less labor and time-intensive than mopping, stripping, and resurfacing hard surfaces.

Shaw carpets are protected by SSP®, Shaw Soil Protection, a formulated fluorocarbon that provides advanced soil protection properties to carpet fibers. SSP® is applied to the fiber during production to provide enhanced protection to the fiber itself.

Sources: CRI and School Planning and Management magazine
CRI website www.carpet-schools.com



With SSP® protection on your floor, you will benefit from:

- Soil retarding properties that deter particles from clinging to fibers
- Assistance in clean up and maintenance of the installation
- Improved appearance over the life of the carpet
- A more cost-effective total maintenance program

SSP® gives you a distinct edge in fighting the traditional floor covering enemies of soiling and staining and is available only through Shaw Contract Group.

Moisture Management

Shaw Contract Group's high-performance 6-foot and broadloom backings include a guaranteed moisture management system that protects the floorcovering against spills and bodily fluids.



Carpet Designed for Healthcare Facilities

Shaw Contract Group's Medscapes and Rejuvenate collections are specifically targeted for healthcare environments, combining performance plus design for the human space. To view these and other Shaw Contract Group products online, visit www.shawcontractgroup.com.