

# Disinfection Guidelines



Cleaning physically removes germs and dirt from surfaces or objects by using soap and water. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

Disinfecting uses chemicals to kill germs on surfaces or objects. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

Current evidence shows that transmission of coronavirus occurs more commonly through person-to-person contact. There is also evidence that the virus may remain viable for on surfaces for several hours.

Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in households and community settings. ([CDC](#))

## How to Clean and Disinfect Safely

Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks) with household cleaners and EPA-registered disinfectants that are appropriate for the surface, following label instructions.

Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product. If no label guidance is provided, consider wearing gloves, eye protection, shoes with socks, and long sleeves/pants.

Coronaviruses are relatively fragile, so standard cleaning and disinfecting practices are sufficient to remove or kill them. Special processes, including wiping down walls and ceilings, frequently using room air deodorizers, and fumigating, are not necessary or recommended. These processes can irritate eyes, noses, throats, and skin; aggravate asthma; and cause other serious side effects.

Disinfection usually requires the product to remain on the surface for a certain period of time (e.g., letting it stand for 3 to 5 minutes).

Keep children, pets, and other people away during the application until the product is dry and there is no odor. Open windows and use fans to ventilate. Step away from odors if they become too strong.

Wash your hands after using any disinfectant, including surface wipes. Throw away disposable items like gloves and masks after use. They cannot be cleaned. Do not use disinfectant wipes to clean hands or as baby wipes.

## Bleach Solution for non-visible Contamination



**Diluted household bleach can be used depending on the surface. Check to ensure the bleach is not past its expiration date.**

**Be careful with bleach: Never combine it with other cleansers and properly ventilate the area.**

### How to Prepare a Bleach Solution, Mix

- 8 tablespoons (1/2 cup) bleach per gallon of water or;
- 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

**For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 60% alcohol, and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.**

There are currently no EPA-registered disinfectants that specifically include the COVID-19 virus on the product label. Refer to the following list from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for products that control the virus: (NPIC) [More Details](#)

Sign up for email or text alerts from the Oregon Health Authority regarding COVID-19 [click here.](#)

Questions or comments? Email us at [publichealth@ncphd.org](mailto:publichealth@ncphd.org) or call 541-506-2600