

COVID-19 Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings Fact Sheet

DID YOU KNOW: Commonly used cleaners and disinfectants can kill off COVID-19

How often should I be cleaning and disinfecting?

- High touch surface areas should be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily or more often when visibly soiled
- Examples of high touch surface areas include: toilet handles, sink handles, doorknobs, tables, chairs, light switches, elevator buttons, pump-dispensers, railings, electronics (cellphones, debit/credit pin pads, keyboards, touch screens, headsets, gaming devices, remotes), etc.

What is the difference between a cleaner and disinfectant?

Cleaners

- Break down grease and remove organic material from the surface
- Used separately before using disinfectants
- Can be purchased with cleaner and disinfectant combined in a single product

Disinfectants

- Have chemicals that kill most germs
- Applied after the surfaces have been cleaned
- Have a drug identification number (DIN)

Disinfectant Wipes

- Have combined cleaners **and** disinfectants in one solution
- May become dry due to fast drying properties. Should be discarded if they become dry.
- Not recommended for heavily soiled surfaces

What should I look for in a disinfectant?

- **Drug Identification Number (DIN) or Natural Product Number (NPN)** - this number means the product is approved by Health Canada
- **Intended use** - this tells you how you should use the product and what personal protective equipment (PPE) is required
- **Contact time** - tells you how long the product needs to stay wet on the surface in order to kill off what the label claims
- Disinfectants can only be used on hard-surfaces. They are not intended for absorbent materials.
- Always read the manufacturer's instructions to understand how to use the product

COVID-19 Info-Line

905-688-8248 press 7 Toll-free: 1-888-505-6074

Updated November 2020. Information about COVID-19 is evolving. Guidance from the Federal and Provincial governments change often. Refer to our website.

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What disinfectants can I use that will kill off COVID-19?

- Low-level disinfectants can kill off COVID-19
- Health Canada has maintained a list of disinfectants with evidence for use against COVID-19: [Hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers \(COVID-19\): List of disinfectants with evidence for use against COVID-19](#)

How long can COVID-19 survive on surfaces if I am not able to disinfect?

SURFACE	LIFESPAN OF COVID-19 VIRUS
Paper and tissue paper	3 hours
Copper	4 hours
Cardboard	24 hours
Wood	2 days
Cloth	2 days
Stainless steel	2-3 days
Polypropylene plastic	3 days
Glass	4 days
Paper money	4 days
Outside of surgical mask	7 days

Source: Chin AWH, Chu JTS, Perera MRA, Hui KPY, Yen H, Chan MCW, et al. Stability of SARS-CoV-2 in different environmental conditions. *Lancet Microbe*. 2020;1(1):e10. Available from: [http://doi.org/10.1016/S2666-5247\(20\)30003-3](http://doi.org/10.1016/S2666-5247(20)30003-3)

Source: Van Doremalen N, Bushmaker T, Morris DH, Hollbrook MG, Gamble A, Williamson BN, et al. Aerosol and Surface Stability of SARS-CoV-2 as Compared with Sars-CoV-1. *N Engl J Med*. 2020;382(16):1564-7. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMc2004973>

What policies should I have in place for cleaning and disinfection?

- A policy should be written that outlines your cleaning and disinfection process. Policies and procedures must include:
 - Who is responsible?
 - What are they responsible for?
 - How frequently cleaning/disinfecting must happen
 - Date the policy was approved and regularly reviewed
- A policy should also include what chemicals are being used, what their contact times are, what PPE is required for use, and any important manufacturer's instructions. This will help staff know the requirements.
- Staff should be trained on how to use the chemicals they are using
- Create a checklist of all high touch surfaces that require cleaning and disinfection that is routinely audited to ensure that high touch surface areas are being disinfected at least twice daily and more often if visibly soiled.

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