

Coronavirus Disease 2019

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Cleaning and Disinfection for Households

Interim Recommendations for U.S. Households with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 (COVID-19)

Summary of Recent Changes

Revisions were made on 3/26/2020 to reflect the following:

- Updated links to EPA-registered disinfectant list
- Added guidance for disinfection of electronics
- Updated core disinfection/cleaning guidance

Background

There is much to learn about the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) that causes [coronavirus disease 2019](#) (COVID-19). On what is currently known about the virus, and about similar coronaviruses that cause SARS-CoV-1. Person-to-person transmission of COVID-19 happens most frequently among close contacts (within about 6 feet). This transmission occurs through respiratory droplets, but disease transmission via infectious aerosols is currently uncertain. Transmission of COVID-19 from persons from surfaces contaminated with the virus has not been documented. Transmission of COVID-19 occurs more commonly through respiratory droplets than through fomites. Current evidence suggests that COVID-19 can remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. Cleaning of visible soiled surfaces and disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory infections in community settings.

It is unknown how long the air inside a room occupied by someone with confirmed COVID-19. Facilities will need to consider factors such as the size of the room and the ventilation system (changes per hour] and location of supply and exhaust vents) when deciding how long to close the room before beginning disinfection. Taking measures to improve ventilation in an area occupied by someone who is or suspected to be ill with COVID-19 will help shorten the time it takes respiratory droplets to settle.


Purpose

This guidance provides recommendations on the cleaning and disinfection of households with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 (PUI) or those with confirmed COVID-19 reside or may be in self-isolation. It is intended to help reduce the risk of the virus in the environments. These recommendations will be updated if additional information becomes available.

These guidelines are focused on household settings and are meant for the general public.

- **Cleaning** refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. It does not necessarily kill germs, but it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.
- **Disinfecting** refers to using chemicals, for example, EPA-registered disinfectants, to kill germs on surfaces. Disinfecting does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface, it further lowers the risk of spreading infection.

General Recommendations for Routine Cleaning and Disinfection

- Community members can practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (for example, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks, and electronics (see below for specific disinfection instructions)) with household cleaners and [EPA-registered disinfectants](#)  on hard, non-porous surface, following label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use, including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and ensuring good ventilation during use of the product.
 - For electronics follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfecting. Use wipeable covers for electronics. If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider using a disinfectant spray containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly before applying liquids.

General Recommendations for Cleaning and Disinfection of Households with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19

Isolated in Home Care (e.g. Suspected/Confirmed to have COVID-19)

- Household members should educate themselves about COVID-19 symptoms and prevent the spread of the virus in their homes.
- **Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces daily in household common areas (e.g. tables, chairs, light switches, phones, tablets, touch screens, remote controls, keyboards, handles, desks, etc.)**
 - In the bedroom/bathroom dedicated for an ill person: consider reducing cleaning of frequently soiled items and surfaces) to avoid unnecessary contact with the ill person.
- As much as possible, an ill person should stay in a specific room and away from other people. See [home care guidance](#).
- The caregiver can provide personal cleaning supplies for an ill person's room and bathroom. If a separate bathroom is not available, the bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected after use by the ill person. If this is not possible, the caregiver should wait as long as practical after use by the ill person to clean and disinfect the high-touch surfaces.
- Household members should follow [home care guidance](#) when interacting with persons who are suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 and their isolation rooms/bathrooms.

How to clean and disinfect:

Hard (Non-porous) Surfaces

- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. Gloves should be discarded after use. If reusable gloves are used, those gloves should be dedicated for cleaning and disinfection and should not be used for other purposes. Consult the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfection. [Clean hands](#) immediately after gloves are removed.
- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective against the virus that causes COVID-19. Follow manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products for (correct use, application method and contact time, etc.).
 - Additionally, diluted household bleach solutions (at least 1000ppm sodium hypochlorite)

- Additionally, diluted household bleach solutions (at least 1000ppm sodium hypochlorite) are appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application, ensure contact time of at least 1 minute, and allowing proper ventilation during and after application. Check to ensure expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
- Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or
 - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

Soft (Porous) Surfaces

- For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes, remove visible contamination with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces. After cleaning:
 - Launder items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely.
 - Otherwise, use products [that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19](#) that are suitable for porous surfaces.

Electronics

- For electronics such as cell phones, tablets, touch screens, remote controls, and keyboards, clean surfaces to remove contamination if present.
 - Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
 - Consider use of wipeable covers for electronics.
 - If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquid.
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Linens, clothing, and other items that go in the laundry

- Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry from an ill person and then discard. If using reusable gloves, those gloves should be dedicated for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces and not be used for other household purposes. [Clean hands](#) immediately after gloves are removed.
 - If no gloves are used when handling dirty laundry, be sure to wash hands afterward.

- If possible, do not shake dirty laundry. This will minimize the possibility of dispersing particles.
- Launder items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely. Dirty linens can be washed with other people's items.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to guidance above for surfaces. If possible, use a liner that is either disposable (can be thrown away) or can be laundered.

Hand hygiene and other preventive measures


- Household members should [clean hands](#) often, including immediately after removing a person who is ill from the home, by washing hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol may be used. If hands are visibly dirty, always wash hands with soap and water.
- Household members should follow normal preventive actions while at work and home, including [hand hygiene](#) and avoiding touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
 - Additional key times to clean hands include:
 - After blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing
 - After using the restroom
 - Before eating or preparing food
 - After contact with animals or pets
 - Before and after providing routine care for another person who needs assistance

Other considerations

- The ill person should eat/be fed in their room if possible. Non-disposable food service items should be handled with gloves and washed with hot water or in a dishwasher. [Clean hands](#) after handling items.
- If possible, dedicate a lined trash can for the ill person. Use gloves when removing garbage and disposing of trash. [Wash hands](#) after handling or disposing of trash.
- Consider consulting with your local health department about trash disposal guidance if needed.

Additional Resources

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [OSHA COVID-19 Website](#) 
- [CDC Home Care Guidance](#)

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National Institutes of Health, 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Maryland 20892

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services