



Gloucester County Department of Health

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What to Routinely Clean and Disinfect in Your Household

Community members can 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, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

How to Disinfect

Disinfecting should be part of your usual cleaning routine, whether or not anyone at home is sick. Check the label to make sure the disinfectant works against the viruses you're targeting, such as cold and flu viruses. Disinfecting can be accomplished with a standard household bleach solution. Bleach comes in different strengths so look for one that is 5.25 %. Use 1 tablespoon of bleach to 1 quart (4 cups) of water.

When you use disinfectant sprays, paper towels are better than sponges, *but disposable disinfectant wipes have an advantage.* Sponges and dishcloths just tend to spread things around. Using paper towels, you spray, wipe, and remove the disinfectant spray. *But when you use a disinfectant wipe, people wipe the surface and let it dry, which gives it more time to kill the organisms. It leaves some residual impact.*

9 Common Touch Surfaces to Disinfect

Think about the items you touch a lot. Things people share are more likely to spread germs. Focus on these items after someone has had a cold or the flu:

1. **Your phone.** Cell and land line phones in homes that have a child with the flu have the flu virus on them. Cold and flu viruses survive on them, anywhere from a few hours to a few days.

2. **The remote control.** It's one of the most touched -- and least cleaned -- items in your house. If someone sneezes into their hand and touches the remote, the germs can get on the remote.
3. **Doorknobs/handles.** Don't forget about doorknobs and handles as these items are touched frequently!
4. **Light switches.** Frequently touched surfaces that can collect and harbor germs.
5. **The bathroom.** Bathroom faucets can have cold and flu viruses on them when someone has a cold or flu. Those tend to get contaminated because your hand goes right there. Give the sick person their own hand towel, to avoid spreading disease through a shared towel. Don't reuse when wiping (for instance, don't wipe the toilet and then the sink).
6. **Tables/Desks.** Kitchen tables, coffee tables, desks, play-area tables, and night tables tend to host cold and flu viruses, because they're touched often and aren't wiped down enough.
7. **Computers.** Check the maker's instructions before cleaning. You may be able to wipe keyboards or screens with an alcohol wipe or a paper towel sprayed with disinfectant.
8. **Stuffed animals.** If possible, toss Teddy in the laundry. If it's not washable, keep it away from everyone for a few days to let viruses on its surface die.
9. **Sheets, blankets, towels.** These should be washed at high temperature with a color-safe bleach detergent. Wash your hands after handling them.

Also, everyone in your home should wash their hands more often when someone is sick. Soap and water is best but the use of hand sanitizers work well also.

Additional guidance specific to Covid-19 can be found on CDC website at:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

*source-webMD & CDC Website

For additional information please contact the Gloucester County Health Department at (856) 218-4101.

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