



## NAVY AND MARINE CORPS PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

PREVENTION AND PROTECTION START HERE

### COVID-19 PREVENTIVE MEDICINE INFORMATION SHEET: PROTECT YOUR HOME

**What's the difference between cleaning and disinfecting?** "Cleaning" refers to the removal of dirt, and impurities for surfaces. "Disinfecting" refers to using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces. This process works better if the surfaces has been cleaned prior to disinfecting.



**What should be routinely cleaned?** 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.

**What are some recommendations for cleaning and disinfection of households with people quarantined in their home?** Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces daily in household common areas. In the bedroom/bathroom dedicated for an ill person: consider reducing cleaning frequency to as-needed (e.g., 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 in their home, following home care guidance.

If a separate bathroom is not available, the bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected after each use by an ill person. If this is not possible, the caregiver should wait as long as practical after use by an ill person to clean and disinfect the high-touch surfaces.

#### How to clean and disinfect hard surfaces?

- Wear disposable gloves. Wash hands after use.
- Clean dirty surface first using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and most common

#### EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.

- Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against COV-19 when properly diluted.
  - o Prepare a bleach solution by mixing: CAUTION: Pour bleach into water not water into bleach!
  - o 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or
  - o 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water

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### **How to clean and disinfect soft (porous) surfaces? (Carpet, drapes, rugs, etc.?)**

- Launder items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely, or use products with the EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims (examples at this <https://www.americanchemistry.com/Novel-Coronavirus-Fighting-Products-List.pdf> ) that are suitable for porous surfaces.

**What about our clothes, and towels?** Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry from an ill person and then discard after each use. If no gloves are used when handling dirty laundry, be sure to wash hands afterwards. Do not shake items prior to placing in washing machine. Launder items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely. Dirty laundry from an ill person can be washed with other people's items.

**Do I need to wash my hands at home?** YES! Household members should clean hands often, including immediately after removing gloves and after contact with an ill person, by washing hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol may be used. However, 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 recommended hand hygiene and avoiding touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

- Additional key times to clean hands include:
  - o After blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing
  - o After using the restroom
  - o Before eating or preparing food
  - o After contact with animals or pets
  - o Before and after providing routine care for another person who needs assistance (e.g. a child)

**For up to date information please always refer to the CDC Coronavirus Disease 2019 website at:**  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/index.html>

**Please contact your local Navy Environmental Preventive Medicine Unit for further guidance.**