



Safer Disinfectant Use During the COVID-19 Pandemic



Using disinfectants on surfaces in your home or workplace can kill disease causing germs (bacteria and viruses), **but they may also have health risks.** For example, many common disinfectants (like bleach, many disinfectant wipes) have chemicals in them that can cause or worsen asthma.



If no one is sick at home:

Clean surfaces in your house with an all-purpose cleaner or soap, and a microfiber cloth (available online, in grocery stores and at big box stores). This will get rid of most of the germs on a surface and avoids excess exposure to disinfectants.

Disinfect after cleaning surfaces that you touch when returning from the outdoors, prior to washing hands.

If someone in your house is sick or suspected to be sick:

Clean surfaces, then disinfect with a product on *both* EPA lists: [Design for the Environment](#) antimicrobial pesticides and [N: Disinfectants](#) for use against SARS-CoV-2.

Look for these safer active ingredients:

- ▶ Citric Acid
- ▶ Hydrogen Peroxide
- ▶ L-lactic acid
- ▶ Ethanol
- ▶ Isopropanol
- ▶ Peroxyacetic acid
- ▶ Sodium Bisulfate.

Apply to the surface and leave glistening wet for the time listed on the product label.

If you can't access safer products

If you don't have access to a microfiber cloth, wash sponges or towels after every surface cleaned:

- ▶ **Clean sponges** by
 - washing in the dishwasher, or
 - soaking for one minute in 1/2 teaspoon of bleach, or
 - microwaving **non-metallic**, soaking wet sponges for one minute.

- ▶ **Wash towels** in a basin or washing machine.

If you only have access to bleach or quaternary ammonia-based disinfectants:

- ▶ **Dilute disinfectants** per the package instructions;
- ▶ **Do not combine disinfectants;** and
- ▶ Be sure to **ventilate the area** as well as possible (open windows, turn on fans).



Find out more, download our detailed safer disinfecting factsheet [here](#).

See disclaimer on detailed safer disinfecting factsheet.



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