



## **COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q: What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**

A: Upper/lower respiratory infection symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath)

### **Q: Who is at risk for COVID-19?**

A: Currently, those at greatest risk of infection are persons who have had prolonged, unprotected close contact with a patient with symptomatic, confirmed COVID-19 and those who live in or have recently been to areas with sustained transmission (China, South Korea, Japan, Italy, and Iran).

### **Q: How is COVID-19 spread?**

A: There is much to learn about the novel coronavirus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Based on what is currently known about the novel coronavirus and similar coronaviruses that cause SARS and MERS, spread from person-to-person with these viruses happens most frequently among close contacts (within about 6 feet). This type of transmission occurs via respiratory droplets. On the other hand, transmission of novel coronavirus to persons from surfaces contaminated with the virus has not been documented. Transmission of coronavirus occurs much more commonly through respiratory droplets than through fomites. Current evidence suggests that novel coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in households and community settings.

### **Q: What are some ways do decrease the risk of COVID-19?**

A: Avoid close contact with sick people, stay home when sick, sanitize all surfaces, wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer, and don't touch your face.



## **Q: What are the general recommendations for routine cleaning and disinfection of households?**

A: 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 the use of the product.

### **Surfaces**

Wear disposable gloves when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. Gloves should be discarded after each cleaning. If reusable gloves are used, those gloves should be dedicated to cleaning and disinfection of surfaces for COVID-19 and should not be used for other purposes. Consult the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfection products used. [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, 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 the 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 coronaviruses when properly diluted.

### **Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:**

- 5 tablespoons (1/3<sup>rd</sup> cup) bleach per gallon of water or
- 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water



[Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens](#) are expected to be effective against COVID-19 based on data for harder to kill viruses. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).

For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes, remove visible contamination if present and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces. After cleaning:

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 link](#)) that are suitable for porous surfaces.

### **Clothing, towels, linens and other items that go in the laundry**

Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry from an ill person and then discard after each use. If using reusable gloves, those gloves should be dedicated for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces for COVID-19 and should 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 the virus through the air.

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.

Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to the guidance above for surfaces. If possible, consider placing a bag liner that is either disposable (can be thrown away) or can be laundered.

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