

COVID-19

Cleaning and disinfection recommendations

6 March 2020

This fact sheet provides recommendations for cleaning and disinfection of the environment where people suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 infection may have been.

For acute healthcare settings and residential care facilities, please refer to the Queensland Health *Interim infection prevention and control guidelines for the management of COVID-19 in healthcare settings* (available at https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0038/939656/qh-covid-19-Infection-control-guidelines.pdf).

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a new virus. Symptoms range from a mild cough to pneumonia. Some people recover easily, others may get very sick very quickly. There is evidence that it spreads from person to person. Good hygiene can prevent infection.

Transmission of COVID-19

COVID-19 is spread from person to person most likely through:

- close contact with an infectious person
- contact with droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze; or
- touching objects or surfaces (like door knobs or tables) contaminated by cough or sneeze droplets from a person with COVID-19 infection, and then touching your mouth or face.

To prevent transmission of COVID-19 while cleaning, good hygiene measures and consistent use of appropriate personal protective equipment is recommended.

Recommended cleaning process

Gather the items needed for cleaning before entering the area and cleaning begins. This may include the following:

- personal protective equipment (PPE)
- cleaning equipment and solutions
- rubbish waste bag
- alcohol-based hand rub.

Personal protective equipment recommendations

People entering the room and the person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should wear a surgical mask if the person with COVID-19 remains in the room while the cleaning is done.

People should use the following process to safely put on the recommended personal protective equipment before entering the area:

- Clean your hands. This can be done with either liquid soap and running water or alcohol-based hand rub.
- Put on a disposable apron. Fasten the back of the apron at the neck and waist.
- If the person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 is in the area to be cleaned put on a surgical mask. Secure the ties of the mask at the middle of the head and neck. Fit the flexible band to nose bridge and ensure mask is fitted snug to face and below the chin. Do not touch or adjust the mask until you are ready to remove the mask.
- Put on protective eyewear to protect your eyes from the cleaning fluids.
- Put on disposable latex or vinyl gloves.

The purpose of personal protective equipment is to reduce the risk of direct contact with contaminated surfaces.

Once cleaning is completed, place all disposable cleaning items in the rubbish waste bag. Waste does not need any additional handling or treatment measures. Reusable cleaning items, such as mop heads, should be cleaned as per the cleaning recommendations below.

People should use the following process to safely remove personal protective equipment:

- Remove and dispose of gloves. The outside of gloves is contaminated. Remove gloves being careful not to contaminate bare hands during glove removal.
- Clean your hands. This can be done with either liquid soap and running water or alcohol-based hand rub.
- Remove and dispose of apron. The apron front maybe contaminated. Untie or break fasteners and pull apron away from body, touching the inside of the apron only.
- Clean your hands. This can be done with either liquid soap and running water or alcohol-based hand rub.
- Remove protective eyewear/face shield. The outside of protective eyewear/face shields maybe contaminated. Remove eyewear/face shield by tilting the head forward and lifting the head band or ear pieces. Avoid touching the front surface of the eyewear/face shield. Reusable protective eyewear should be placed into a container and washed in detergent and water and allowed to completely air dry.
- Clean your hands. This can be done with either liquid soap and running water or alcohol-based hand rub.
- Remove and dispose of surgical mask if worn. Do not touch the front of the surgical mask. Remove the surgical mask by holding the elastic straps or ties and remove without touching the front.
- Clean your hands. This can be done with either liquid soap and running water or alcohol-based hand rub.
- Personal protective equipment can be disposed into general waste.

Tips for using personal protective equipment safely and effectively:

- Once you enter the area, avoid touching your face and don't touch or adjust your face mask if one is worn.

- If wearing a mask, it should be either on or off – ensure it always covers both the nose and mouth and don't let it dangle from the neck.

Cleaning recommendations

Once the person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 vacates a room, cleaning can commence immediately. The room and all hard surfaces in the room should be physically cleaned. All furniture, equipment, horizontal surfaces and all frequently touched surfaces (e.g. door handles) should be thoroughly cleaned.

Cleaning of hard surfaces (e.g. bench tops) should be done using either:

- a physical clean using a combined detergent and 1,000ppm bleach solution (2-in-1 clean) made up daily from a concentrated solution. Follow manufacturer's directions for dilution.
- a physical clean using detergent and water followed by a clean with 1,000ppm bleach solution (2-step clean), for example, household bleach or hospital-grade bleach solutions that are readily available from retail stores. Follow manufacturer's directions for use or see Table 1 below for dilution recipe.

Bleach solutions should be made fresh daily and gloves should be worn when handling and preparing bleach solutions. Protective eyewear should be worn in case of splashing.

Cleaning equipment including mop heads and cloths should be laundered using hot water and completely dried before re-use. Cleaning equipment, such as buckets, should be emptied and cleaned with a new batch of chlorine bleach solution and allowed to dry completely before re-use.

Preparation of bleach solutions

Household bleach comes in a variety of strengths of the active ingredient (sodium hypochlorite) and you can find this information on the product label often listed as available chlorine.

Table 1. Recipes to achieve a 1,000ppm bleach solution

Original strength of bleach (available chlorine)	Disinfectant recipe to make up 1 litre of bleach solution. In a bucket, place the volume of water required and gently add the measured volume of bleach.	
%	Volume of bleach	Volume of water
1	100ml	900ml
2	50ml	950ml
3	33ml	967ml
4	25ml	975ml
5	20ml	980ml