

PROTECTING YOUR HOME FROM COVID-19

<https://www.smh.com/blog/protecting-your-home-from-covid-19>

When it comes to infection control, hospitals and other healthcare centers are well-prepared and well-practiced — with proven tools and protocols, and decades of experience in stopping the spread of infectious disease.

But what about our homes? How can we ensure they too are clean and safe from novel coronavirus?

Infection Control at Home

In addition to proper hand hygiene, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends cleaning and disinfecting commonly touched surfaces in your home daily to REDUCE THE POTENTIAL SPREAD OF COVID-19.

No special, out-of-the-ordinary supplies are required, and you likely already have everything you need on hand: water, soap, gloves and disinfectant.

If possible, wear disposable gloves when cleaning your home or handling dirty laundry; toss the gloves in the trash as soon as you're done. And always, always wash your hands after removing gloves.

Disinfecting Hard Surfaces

Frequently touched surfaces that should be disinfected include countertops, mirrors, doorknobs, light switches, your home telephone, and handles on sink faucets, toilets, microwaves, ovens and refrigerators. (Computers and personal electronics must also be cleaned; see below for related guidance.)

The CDC advises using a two-step approach for disinfecting hard surfaces against COVID-19: First, use soap and water to remove dirt and reduce germs; then knock out any remaining germs by applying a disinfectant.

Choose a product from THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY'S LIST OF DISINFECTANTS THAT MEET EPA CRITERIA FOR USE AGAINST THE VIRUS THAT CAUSES COVID-19; or use a common household disinfectant like bleach, ammonia, alcohol or cleaning agents containing any of these. Be sure to read the disinfectant's label, and follow all instructions and precautions.

If bleach is all you have on hand, make a disinfectant solution by mixing 4 teaspoons of household bleach into 1 quart of water. Never mix bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser, as the mixture could produce toxic fumes.

Disinfecting Linens & Other Fabrics

When laundering linens, towels, clothes and other items, use the warmest possible water setting, dry the load completely and wash your hands after handling. Avoid shaking dirty laundry, and be sure to disinfect laundry hampers regularly. The CDC encourages wearing disposable gloves when washing laundry used by someone who's sick.

Disinfecting Cloth Face Masks / Face Coverings

Fabric, reusable face coverings should be routinely washed, ideally after each use. Laundering them in the washing machine on the warmest possible water setting should be sufficient, according to the CDC.

Disinfecting Cellphones & Other Electronics

Some of the most frequently handled household items are cellphones, TV and stereo remote controls, computer keyboards, laptops, tablets and other touchscreen devices. Before disinfecting electronics, read the manufacturers' instructions for cleaning.

The CDC recommends using disinfecting wipes that are 70% alcohol to clean cellphones and similar devices. Wipe the device's face, along the sides and the back, where you typically hold it. Let it air dry thoroughly, and wash your hands immediately when you're done.

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Useful Resources

POISON CONTROL HOTLINE

800-222-1222

EPA RECOMMENDED DISINFECTANTS

CLEANING & DISINFECTING YOUR HOME (CDC)

CLEANING FABRIC MASKS (CDC)

PROPER MASK USE