



WHAT IS COVID-19?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. Patients with COVID-19 have experienced mild to severe respiratory illness, including fever, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel (new) coronavirus. It is not the same as other types of coronaviruses that commonly circulate among people and cause mild illness, like the common cold. The risk for severe illness from COVID-19 increases with age, with older adults at highest risk.

HOW DOES COVID-19 SPREAD?

The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person, between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer) through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. The best way to protect yourself and to help reduce the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19 is to limit your interactions with other people as much as possible and take precautions to prevent getting COVID-19 when you do interact with others. Those steps include wearing a face covering, maintaining social distance of 6 feet and washing your hands frequently. If you start feeling sick and think you may have COVID-19, get in touch with your healthcare provider within 24 hours.

SURFACE CONTAMINATION CONCERNS

The virus is known to be detected on surfaces for up to 72 hours. Based on this, citizens should follow the following cleaning recommendations, especially if they have a visitor with a known case of COVID-19.

COMMONLY-USED SURFACES

Surfaces that are commonly touched in the home and automobile (e.g. tables, hard-backed chairs, doorknobs, light switches, remotes, handles, desks, toilets, sinks, handles, steering wheels) should be cleaned and disinfected.

CLEANING BEST PRACTICES

- PLEASE NOTE: this guidance **does not** apply to healthcare facilities. These facilities should follow the CDC's specific guidance regarding healthcare settings.
- Wear disposable gloves and discard them after cleaning.
- If surfaces have dirt on them, use standard detergent containing soap and water prior to disinfection.

DISINFECTION OF NON-POROUS SURFACES

- Use diluted bleach solutions (never mix bleach with other cleaners).
- Household bleach is effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted (5 tablespoons [1/3rd cup] of bleach per gallon of water).
- If bleach is not available, use an [approved product](#) shown to be effective against this coronavirus.



CLEANING SOFT SURFACES

- Soft surfaces include carpets, rugs and floors.
- Remove any visible contamination and clean with standard cleaners.
- For items that can be laundered, handle them with gloves and wash them according to manufacturer recommendations, if possible use the warmest water setting.

APPROVED PRODUCTS TO DEACTIVATE THE CORONAVIRUS

Only products that are scientifically proven to be effective should be used for disinfection. The Indiana Office of the State Chemist maintains a list of registered disinfectants that meet the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) criteria or use against SARS-CoV-2, the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

The list, which is frequently updated, is available online at: <https://www.oisc.purdue.edu/>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information and resources for COVID-19 are available at the links below.

- CDC COVID-19 webpage: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/>
- ISDH COVID-19 webpage: <https://coronavirus.in.gov/>
- U.S. EPA Registered Antimicrobial Products for Use Against Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, the Cause of COVID-19: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- Indiana Office of the State Chemist webpage: <https://www.oisc.purdue.edu/>