



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

While there is not currently evidence of anyone contracting COVID-19 by coming into contact with surfaces, the virus is known to be detected on surfaces for up to 72 hours. Based on this, businesses should follow the following cleaning recommendations if they have an employee or visitor with a known case of COVID-19.

COMMONLY USED SURFACES

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

CLEANING STAFF BEST PRACTICES

- Wait at least six hours before entering the workplace to do the cleaning.
- 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 [1/3 cup] of bleach per gallon of water).
- If bleach is not available, then use an [approved product](#) shown to have antiviral activities.



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.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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

- CDC COVID-19 webpage: <https://coronavirus.gov>
- ISDH COVID-19 webpage: <https://www.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/sites/production/files/2020-03/documents/sars-cov-2-list_03-03-2020.pdf