

Decontamination Best Practices: Taking Care of You

Basis of Good Practices

PROTECT

- Prevent contaminating yourself
- Protect yourself from harsh chemicals

CLEAN

- Using soap and water, remove soil and debris that may hinder disinfection

DISINFECT

- Use an EPA-registered disinfectant
- Treat items following directions



Protect Yourself

- The SARS-CoV2 virus is much more likely to be spread as respiratory droplets than through contaminated objects and surfaces
- Practice good hand hygiene
- Wash hands preferably with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before touching your face, eyes, or respirator; use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol when unable to wash your hands
- Wear gloves when handling potentially contaminated items and when using disinfectants
- Dispose of used gloves and cleaning supplies in a dedicated bin with liner

Clothing

- Wear gloves or wash hands after handling potentially contaminated laundry
- Regularly launder clothing using the warmest appropriate water setting and completely dry the items
- Wipe down shoes and accessories with a compatible disinfectant

Disinfectants

- Use soap and water to first clean dirty items, then use a household disinfectant as per the labeled instructions
- Diluted bleach or at least 70% isopropyl alcohol are appropriate for many non-porous surfaces
 - Dilute household bleach to about 2% (4 teaspoons per quart (4 cups) of tap water)
- Use at least a 1-minute contact time
- EPA-registered surface disinfectants (including surface wipes) for use against SARS-CoV2 **should not** be applied on your skin or ingested
- See <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2> for a list of hundreds of registered disinfectants

Filtering Facepiece Respirators (N95s)

- Check the manufacturer's instructions for proper cleaning, but if instructions are not available, the CDC suggests that moist heat, vaporous hydrogen peroxide, and ultraviolet germicidal irradiation are candidates for limited reuse, seek expert guidance before applying
 - Do not use alcohol as it will damage the mask

- The CDC recommends that if you must reuse your N95 without cleaning to store it in a breathable paper bag at the end of a shift
 - Use a rotation of five respirators, with a minimum of five days between each N95 use
- Assume the outside of the mask is contaminated
 - Remove the mask without touching the exterior (use the straps)
 - Do not touch the inside of the mask
- Follow your respirator training and manufacturer's instructions to perform seal and integrity checks

Other Resources

Cleaning and disinfection procedures partly depend upon the type of surface, material compatibility, and surface complexity. Refer to these resources for further details:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/disinfecting-your-home.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/decontamination-reuse-respirators.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hcwcontrols/recommendedguidanceextuse.html>



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