



Advice for efficient cleaning and disinfection

- COVID-19 is an infectious viral disease which spreads from person to person by means of the projection of an aerosol, mainly through close contact with infectious persons.
- If the conditions are favourable, the virus can survive on contaminated surfaces for up to three days, but it can be destroyed by cleaning and disinfection. This means that **the virus can be removed from surfaces by using efficient cleaning techniques and detergents.**
- Heating, UV light, and various antimicrobial substances, such as 70% ethanol, 75% isopropyl alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, and sodium hypochlorite, are efficient means against various forms of coronavirus. Contact must last at least one minute in order to destroy the virus.
- The risk of the spread of COVID-19 is at its highest in enclosed, crowded, and poorly ventilated rooms.
- The purpose of the guidelines is to provide advice for routine wet cleaning and the cleaning of frequently used premises and objects and frequently touched surfaces (contact surfaces), as well as objects which are in public use, by using regular household detergents and/or disinfectants.

General hygiene advice

CLEANING HANDS

- **Wash hands regularly with soap** – upon arriving home, after using the toilet, before eating, after coming into contact with a potentially contaminated object or surface, etc.
- Do not forget that **drying your hands** is a very important stage of the process of washing your hands. Use disposable paper towels for this purpose, especially in public toilets.
- **EFFICIENT HAND-WASHING ENSURES RELIABLE PROTECTION FROM VIRUSES!**
- Only use a hand sanitiser if it is not possible to wash your hands.
- Hand sanitisers are biocides which must be used pursuant to the instructions.

CLEANING SURFACES

- **Wash surfaces** thoroughly with a detergent and wet cloth.
- **Dry all wet surfaces.**
- **EFFICIENT WET CLEANING OF SURFACES ENSURES RELIABLE PROTECTION FROM VIRUSES!**
- Only use sanitising substances if it is very likely that the surfaces have been contaminated with the virus and if no other cleaning techniques can be used.
- Detergents and sanitisers are chemicals/biocides which must be used pursuant to the instructions.

PRINTABLE MATERIALS

[General rules for cleaning hands](#)

[See how to wash your hands properly](#)

[Sanitising hands](#)

[General rules for cleaning a surface](#)

Cleaning efficiently

1. **Air rooms** to ensure adequate ventilation.
2. **Identify contact surfaces** (such as door handles, railings, lift buttons, switches, chair armrests (top and bottom), surfaces in toilets and bathrooms, etc), tour the rooms, and find any contaminated objects. Observe and think about which places may be coming into contact with people. Experts claim that over 90% of contact surfaces around soap and paper towel dispensers are dirty (on the bottom and around the pumps and buttons). The edges of doors and the area around the door handle, the bottoms and



backrests of chairs at schools, objects that are in public use, various tools in offices (such as keyboards, staplers, VR goggles in video game centres, kitchen appliances, phones, etc) are also contact surfaces which are often forgotten about.

3. **Wet cleaning** is necessary for removing dirt from surfaces (including micro-organisms). It is important to keep in mind the fact that all surfaces that require more than thirty seconds to dry must be **dried separately**. If surfaces are left to dry naturally then residual dirt, as well as micro-organisms, may be left on the surfaces.
4. Normal methods are fully adequate for cleaning. For example, a clean microfibre cloth which has been moistened with clean water may be used. The cloth must be wet enough (but not too much) to bind enough dirt to it and cleaned surfaces must be scrubbed properly. Mechanical work - wiping - has an important role in removing dirt. Surfaces must be scrubbed sufficiently. By only gently wiping the surface, a significant amount of dirt and micro-organisms on the surface may be left behind. Based on studies which have been conducted on this very topic, this method makes it possible to adequately remove infectious viruses and there is no direct or further need for using disinfectants for prevention purposes.
5. For cleaning smooth surfaces, the cloth (such as a microfibre cloth) may only be moistened with water. In the case of porous surfaces, though, a slightly alkaline detergent solution (pH 8-9) provides the best results, including in the case of using disposable cleaning cloths.
6. Keep in mind the following information when assessing whether your cloth is wet enough:
 - An insufficiently wet cloth: using such a cloth may not leave the surface damp. If the surface is left damp it will dry in as little as one-to-three seconds. This method is suitable for removing dust.
 - A wet cloth: this leaves the surface slightly wet. It will take no more than thirty seconds to dry. If it takes the surface longer to dry then the cloth is wet and requires drying. Wet cleaning is a good method for cleaning contact surfaces, but adequate scrubbing is also necessary, and it is advisable to use a micro-fibre cloth.
 - A wet cloth: requires drying! A wet cloth should only be used if it is necessary to 'soak' dirt off the surface. A damp cloth is sufficiently wet for removing lighter dirt. A wet microfibre cloth may lose its mechanical cleaning properties and thereby become less efficient.
7. **Clean** contact surfaces and easily-soiled objects **more frequently** than other surfaces and objects, **and do so regularly**. In public premises which are used by a large number of people, as an example, it is advisable to clean contact surfaces every two to four hours. Keep in mind that a surface which is visually clean may not be free of any micro-organisms. Visible dirt, however, provides an especially good hiding place for micro-organisms.
8. Thoroughly clean the cleaning equipment itself each time it has been used in any cleaning routines. Wash textile cleaning supplies in a washing machine at a high temperature. In the case of a domestic washing machine, use a temperature of between 65-90°C. Such textile cleaning supplies cannot be sufficiently cleaned by washing manually in a bucket of water or under running water.
9. If necessary, appropriate disinfectants or biocides (see the advice below) may also be used for cleaning sanitary facilities (toilets and bathrooms).
10. Attention should be paid to folding cloths and to using an aseptic cleaning method, ie. moving from a cleaner surface in the direction of a more heavily soiled surface, turning the cloth around when cleaning different surfaces, etc. The aim is to collect dirt, not to spread it.
11. The handling and usage path of various cleaning textiles must be thought through to prevent contamination of those supplies before use. Different cleaning tools should be used for cleaning different areas of any premises in order to prevent spreading dirt around, including microbes, with the help of the available tools. A separate cloth should be used for cleaning each room in an office (as well as for cleaning each separate surface or desk if possible). This is more efficient than spraying a disinfectant on the premises or surfaces or wiping it down with a cloth which has been moistened with a disinfectant.



12. Do not use objects which are easily soiled or which require frequent cleaning, if possible. Empty waste bins when they are filled to an extent of three quarters of their total volume space and clean the bins after emptying.

Cleaning and sanitising a room that has been occupied by an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 prior to hospitalisation and/or quarantine and in which they may have contaminated their surroundings with infectious secretions

1. Clean premises and surfaces thoroughly, as described above. Only use sanitising substances if it is very likely that the surfaces have been contaminated with the virus and if no other cleaning techniques can be used.
2. Cleaning equipment must be easy-to-clean and must be cleaned after it has been used to clean those premises and before starting to clean any other premises with the same equipment. If reusable cleaning supplies cannot be washed in a washing machine then disposable cloths should be used.
3. Reusable cleaning supplies and textile supplies must be washed at a temperature of at least 90°C. If hot water cannot be used due to the characteristics of the fibres, special chemicals should be used for washing textile supplies (eg. bleaches or detergents which contain sodium hypochlorite or special detergents for textiles).
4. Secretions and secretion stains (eg. spit, vomit, blood, or excrement) must be wiped away with a disposable cloth. Collect any waste that is generated during the course of cleaning operations in a bag which can be sealed and then dispose of it as waste.
5. Any premises and surfaces which may have been contaminated with SARS-CoV-2 must be cleaned thoroughly before reusing. To be extra careful, such surfaces may be disinfected with a substance which has a virucidal effect or a biocide which has a known effect against coronaviruses.
6. In the case of SARS-CoV-2, it is advisable to use disinfectants which contain either 0.1-0.5% of sodium hypochlorite or at least 70% of ethanol (the substances must be left on the surface for at least one full minute) or other virucidal substances.

What should be kept in mind when using disinfectants?

1. A disinfectant is a **biocide**. *'A biocide is a product which contains as its active ingredient a chemical or micro-organism which destroys, neutralises, or tackles organisms which are hazardous to humans. Products which are used for the same purpose, but which have a fully physical or mechanical effect, are not biocides.'*
2. The information on the packaging must be read carefully and the user instructions must be followed because different disinfectants require different contact times to ensure a sufficient disinfecting effect.
3. Only use sanitising substances if it is very likely that the surfaces have been contaminated with the virus and if no other cleaning techniques can be used.
4. Skilful wet cleaning is the most efficient method of removing microbes if premises and surfaces are sprayed with a disinfectant or wiped down with a cloth which has been moistened with a disinfectant.
5. Disinfectants may damage various surfaces. After disinfection, surfaces must be rewashed and dried in order to remove the disinfectant from the surfaces and to prevent any potential damaging of the surfaces.

What can cleaning operators do to protect themselves?



1. Easy-to-clean clothing and footwear should be worn. When cleaning premises which have been used by an individual who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, a non-impregnable apron or clothing should be worn.
2. Disposable gloves and protective gloves should be worn, preferably gloves with long sleeves (such as nitrile gloves of a thickness of at least 0.3mm and which are compliant with En-374-1). A sufficient number of protective gloves should be made available and disposable gloves should be exchanged at an appropriate frequency.
3. Double protective gloves must be worn when cleaning and sanitising sanitary facilities if necessary. Thin, disposable gloves must be worn under protective gloves which protect the user from the chemical which is being used. The efficiency of the gloves against the chemical being used should always be checked.
4. In the event of using a disinfectant which contains chloride, respiratory protective equipment must also be used. This is highly important!
5. Gloves and other protective equipment must be chosen based on the information that is provided in the chemical data sheet. When cleaning any premises that have been used by an individual who has been infected with COVID-19, respiratory protective equipment (FFP3) and face masks and protective goggles must be worn. Tools must be cleaned carefully.
6. Protective equipment must be removed without touching the contaminated surfaces of that equipment.
7. After removing protective gloves or other protective equipment, hands must be washed in soap and warm water as soon as possible or, if this is not possible, hand sanitiser must be used. After carrying out cleaning operations, the individual who undertook those operations must wash themselves thoroughly under a shower and using antiseptic washing products.
8. In workplaces and public spaces, individuals must be appointed who will be responsible for cleaning easily-soiled objects. There are objects in many businesses which the cleaning service provider is not required to clean and which are actually rarely cleaned in-house either (such as sticker guns, various office supplies in medical institutions, wheels and the lower parts of medical equipment, etc).

Further information:

- [Further information about COVID-19](#)
- [The Health Board's information about disinfectants](#)
- In the case of poisoning, call 16662 [in Estonian](#) or [in Russian](#)
- A cleaning expert regarding cleaning contact surfaces, [in Estonian](#) and [in Russian](#)