

## How to Sanitize Everyday Surfaces and Stop the Spread of Flu Virus

You can help stop the spread of the flu virus by regularly cleaning and disinfecting commonly touched surfaces by following these suggestions:

1. **Keep surfaces and countertops clean of visible soil by cleaning with soap and water followed by a disinfectant**
2. **Clean and disinfect bathroom surfaces daily using soap and water followed by a disinfectant**
3. **Clean and disinfect kitchen area surfaces, such as sink faucets, handles and countertops with soap and water followed by a disinfectant**
4. **Wipe frequently touched electronic items such as remote controls, hand-held gaming devices, phones and keyboards with hand-sanitizer or disinfecting cloths**
5. **Carry hand-sanitizer cloths in your car to use on hands and surfaces in cars**

### ***Using disinfectants:***

- **Follow label instructions carefully when using disinfectants and cleaners**
  - Use household gloves
  - Make sure the room is ventilated
  - Avoid mixing disinfectants and cleaners
    - Combining certain products (such as chlorine bleach and ammonia cleaners) can be harmful and result in serious injury or death
- **If disinfectants are not available, use a dilute solution of household chlorine bleach (sodium hypochlorite) to disinfect bathroom surfaces**
  - To prepare this solution, add ¼ cup of bleach to a gallon of clean water, or 1 tablespoon of bleach to a quart of clean water
  - Apply the solution to a cleaned surface and allow to air dry

### ***Use good hygiene practices:***

- **WASH YOUR HANDS** keep your hands clean
  - When you or others are sick, especially if you touch your mouth, nose, and eyes
- **Cover your cough or sneeze**
  - Use your upper sleeve (not your hands) or
  - Use a tissue and put the used tissues in a waste basket then **WASH YOUR HANDS.**
- **Clean your hands as soon as possible after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose.**
  - Use soap and water and wash your hands for 15 - 20 seconds; or
  - Use alcohol-based hand wipes or alcohol-based (60-95% alcohol) gel hand sanitizers; rub these on the hands until the liquid or gel dries.
- **ALWAYS clean your hands before eating.**
- **Carry alcohol-based hand wipes** or alcohol-based (60-95% alcohol) hand-sanitizing gels with you to clean your hands when you are out in public.
- **Teach your children to use good hygiene practices** at school as well as at home.

By applying these hygiene practices, you can help to prevent the spread of flu in normal everyday settings and in the community.

## **Recommendations for Cleaning and Janitorial Services**

### **How long can influenza virus remain viable on objects or in the environment?**

Studies have shown that influenza virus can survive on environmental surfaces and can infect a person for up to 2-8 hours after being deposited on the surface.

- There is no evidence that influenza virus infection can be transmitted **directly** from environmental surfaces
- Viruses can contaminate the environment, especially when infected persons are present and actively shedding virus in respiratory secretions.

### **Is there a special cleaning schedule recommended for influenza viruses?**

- Routine cleaning and disinfection strategies used during influenza seasons can be applied to the environmental management.
- Laundry and solid waste management can be performed as usual.

### **What kills the influenza virus?**

Influenza viruses are readily sensitive to a wide variety of chemical disinfectants and destroyed by heat (167-212°F [75-100°C]).

- Cleaning with soap or detergent in water is the first step in surface treatment. Cleaning will remove soil and organic matter that would otherwise reduce the effectiveness of the disinfection step that follows.
- There is no indication for cleaning procedures that differ from what is done routinely.
- Any commercially available soap or detergent can be used. Water can be cold or warm, or as recommended on the label of the cleaning product used (if a specific temperature is listed).

Influenza viruses can be inactivated by many low- or intermediate level disinfectants containing any of the following ingredients:

- chlorine or hypochlorite
- aldehydes
- quaternary ammonium compounds [quats]
- phenolics
- alcohols
- peroxygen compounds

## **Best Defense Against Influenza.**

- **Practice proper handwashing or hand hygiene**
- **Cover your cough**
- **Stay home if you are sick**

