

# Cleaning and disinfecting your COVID-19 infected home

Has someone you live with been diagnosed with COVID-19, or are they displaying symptoms of the virus and are self-isolating? When this happens, your first job is to reduce the spread and survival of the virus in your home.

The Centers for Disease Control has a home care guide to teach household members how best to interact with the sick person. Please see the link in the resources section at the bottom of this document.

## Containing the germs

Dedicate one room for rest, recovery, and isolation of the sick person(s) away from other members of the household. If possible, dedicate a bathroom to their sole use. If you only have one bathroom, it should be cleaned and disinfected after every use by the sick person.

Give the sick person (only if they are an able-bodied adult) personal cleaning supplies such as facial tissues, sanitizers, cleaners, paper towels, disinfectants, and a lined trash can for their isolation area.

The sick person should eat (or be fed) in the isolation area.

## How to clean and disinfect items in the home

- When cleaning hard or nonporous surfaces, you should use disposable gloves, if available. You can also use reusable cleaning gloves, if you have a pair dedicated for COVID-19 virus cleaning and disinfections only. Gloves or no gloves, wash your hands promptly after touching and cleaning contaminated items.
  - Read the instructions on your cleaning and disinfecting products. Be sure to follow all the directions about whether to dilute, how to apply, necessary drying time, and ventilation requirements.
  - Before disinfecting, you should look for dirt or grime. Use a soap or detergent plus water to clean off the dirt before you disinfect.
  - Refer to the list of EPA-approved products that will disinfect a surface contaminated with COVID-19.
  - A bleach solution can be used if you do not have access to the items on the EPA list.
    - Use 1/3 cup (5 tablespoons) of bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons of bleach per one quart of water.
    - Have proper ventilation during and after using bleach.
    - Do not mix bleach with other cleaners or ammonia.
    - Check the expiration date of the bleach. Only unexpired bleach, when properly diluted, will disinfect surfaces contaminated with coronavirus.
    - Bleach may not be appropriate for all surfaces or could damage a surface. Please read the bottle for manufacturer's instructions.

- Soft, porous surfaces should be treated according to manufacturer's instructions.
  - Remove dirt using cleaners designed for the surface.
  - If possible, launder using the warmest water temperature allowable by the item's manufacturer.
  - If not possible to launder, use the EPA-approved products list to identify what can be used on the surface.
- You should also disinfect electronics that are frequently touched. Read and follow the instructions provided by your device's manufacturer. If no guidance is available, you could use alcohol-based products that contain 70% alcohol to disinfect. You do not want liquid to pool, so dry thoroughly.
- Items that can go in the laundry (towels, washcloths, clothes, sheets) should be handled with disposable gloves or reusable gloves that are dedicated to use for COVID-19 virus contaminated items.
  - Do not shake dirty laundry. This can spread the virus in the air.
  - Launder in the warmest water possible for the item according to the washing instructions on the tag.
  - Clean and disinfect clothes hampers used to gather and move clothes in between uses. You could also use a trash bag to line the hamper, and then throw it away.

All members of the household should wash their hands frequently, and avoid touching their face, eyes, nose, and mouth.

## Resources

- List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2  
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- Preventing the Spread of Coronavirus Disease 2019 in Homes and Residential Communities  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html>
- Caring for someone at home  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html>
- Cleaning and Disinfection for Households  
[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprepare%2Fcleaning-disinfection.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprepare%2Fcleaning-disinfection.html)
- Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Home  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html>

## Source:

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