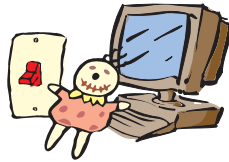


Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Home



Routine cleaning removes dirt, soil, grease and other impurities from surfaces in your home; cleaning with soap or detergent alone, however, will not destroy harmful bacteria or viruses, such as H1N1. In order to kill bacteria and viruses, a disinfectant must be used.

To make your home as safe as possible from bacteria and viruses which make people sick, you need to clean and disinfect. The H1N1 pandemic and the flu season is drawing attention to the need to keep our homes as free of bacteria and viruses as possible but these practices will serve you and your family well all year round.

What product should I use?

The easiest and fastest way to clean and disinfect your home is to choose a product that does both. Examples of common products that both clean and disinfect are Lysol™, Virox™ and Fantastik™. Products should contain sodium hypochlorite, quaternary ammonium, or hydrogen peroxide in sufficient quantities to kill 99.99% of bacteria and viruses that are harmful to people. Read the label of the cleaner / disinfectant you intend to use to see whether it contains one of these ingredients, and if it claims to be able to kill 99.99% of “germs”.

An alternative to choosing a product which both cleans and disinfects is to first clean with a soap or detergent (such as Mr. Clean™, Green Kitchen Cleaner™, or CLR™), and then disinfect surfaces where bacteria or viruses are most likely to be found with a disinfectant.

Where should I disinfect?

Most people clean their homes on a regular schedule. To help prevent the spread of H1N1, maintain your cleaning schedule and add a disinfection step if you are not already using a product which both cleans and disinfects.

You should pay the most attention to areas where viruses and bacteria are likely to be found and spread from person to person.

Sinks, toilets, showers, bath tubs, and laundry machines should be cleaned and disinfected regularly.

Kitchen and bathroom counter tops, and surfaces and objects that are touched by many people on a daily basis should be cleaned and disinfected often. These include:

- hand rails,
- bedside tables,
- children’s toys,
- door knobs,
- phones,
- light switches,
- soap dispensers,
- toilet handles
- computer or electronic equipment (e.g., sound systems, remote controls) that is shared by many people,
- kitchen, coffee and end tables,
- and any other equipment or fixture that is handled or touched often.

If someone in your home is sick, or if you’re doing something which requires extra cleaning (e.g., preparing and cooking a turkey), you may want to disinfect more frequently.

You should also clean and disinfect more frequently if you have young children, or if you work in a job where you're exposed to a lot of people who may be ill (e.g., a doctor's office) or you are in regular, close contact with the public.

When in doubt, disinfect!

How should I clean?

- Use a broom or vacuum to remove dirt and debris from floors and stairs.
- Wet mop floors and stairs as needed; disinfect floors regularly.
- Take care of mop heads by rinsing with clear water and letting them dry after use; wash mop heads regularly
- Disinfect commonly used fixtures and equipment often, or when visibly dirty.
- Clean and disinfect other fixtures, furniture and equipment on a regular basis.
- Disinfect waste baskets as needed.

An easy way to prepare a disinfectant solution is to mix 1 part bleach to 100 parts water (e.g., 10 ml bleach in 1 liter water). It's better to prepare a solution with the disinfectant, dip your cloth or sponge into the solution, and then wipe it onto the surfaces you want to disinfect. Spraying products may damage expensive furniture or expensive equipment, like computers.

Some cleaning products will damage surfaces – when in doubt, check with a janitorial supply store. And always wear rubber gloves when handling disinfectants.

Additional precautions to take if someone in your home has the flu

- Line the garbage bin used by the sick person with a plastic bag, so you don't need to touch the contents. The ideal garbage bin has a foot pedal, so that you do not need to touch the garbage to put something in the bin, or take out the bag.
- Clean and disinfect door knobs, light switches, and other hard surfaces that are frequently touched by an ill person at least once a day to help prevent spread of the illness to other members of your home.