

Safety Guidance for Cleaning & Disinfecting for COVID-19 (and in general)

The best way to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is to protect yourself and others from being exposed. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has put out helpful [guidance on protecting yourself](#) from COVID-19 and specific [information for people with asthma](#).

While we're all cleaning more than ever at home and at work, it's important to **remember safe cleaning & disinfecting practices** to protect your health and the health of those around you. Inappropriate use of cleaning products can cause mild to severe asthma symptoms, new onset of asthma, and other health issues!

- **Protect yourself** by wearing waterproof cleaning gloves and masks if available. Chemicals and fragrances in cleaning products (including aerosols and wipes) can irritate skin, eyes, and lungs, so avoid direct contact **and** use the least toxic product whenever possible*.
- **Wash your hands** with soap & water for at least 20 seconds immediately after cleaning. Wash hands immediately and throw away protective wear if damaged or soiled with bodily fluids.
- **Ventilate well** during and after cleaning (ex: opening windows) no matter what the product.
- **Protect others** in your household by cleaning when others aren't around or moving household members to a different room while you clean. Store cleaning materials out of reach of children and pets.
- **Never mix products!** (ex: chlorine or bleach plus ammonia can produce deadly gases!)

*The CDC recommends [this searchable list of EPA-approved disinfectants](#) that are expected to be effective against COVID-19 based on data for harder-to-kill viruses.

We recognize that product choices may be limited at this time. Whenever possible, try to **avoid products with the following ingredients**, which can cause asthma symptoms or new onset of asthma with repeated use:

- Fragrance, scents, or dyes – **choose unscented** when you can!
- Quaternary ammonium compounds or "Quats"
- Ammonia
- Bleach

Preparing household disinfectants:

Alcohol solutions: Use solutions with at least 70% alcohol.

Bleach solutions: Mix 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water **OR** mix 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water.

No matter what the product, **always follow the manufacturer's instructions for dilution, application, and proper ventilation**. You can also read the [CDC guidance on cleaning & disinfecting for coronavirus](#), including recommended bleach or alcohol solutions when necessary.

More Detailed Guidance Here:

- [MassCOSH Comprehensive Information on COVID-19](#): Guidance & materials for workers
- [Boston Public Health Commission \(BPHC\) Guidance on Cleaning & Disinfecting for COVID-19](#)
- [BPHC Guidance on PPE for Frontline Staff](#): Safe use & disposal of personal protective wear