



## **COVID-19 (March 2020)**

### **Waste Disposal, Laundry and Household Cleaning Protocols- For Active Infection**

#### **Waste Disposal**

Discard all tissues and other disposable items used by the infectious individual into a garbage bag and tie up bag and place into another bag. Tie up this second bag and put it directly into an external trash container. This is called “double bagging”.

The “double bagging” procedure applies to all Personal Protective Equipment that has been worn and needs to be disposed.

Perform hand hygiene after touching used tissues and similar waste. Perform hand hygiene after double bagging garbage.

#### **Laundry**

Linens belonging to those who are infectious should be cleaned separately.

Wash linens (such as bed sheets and towels) by using household laundry soap and tumble dry on a hot setting. Avoid “hugging” laundry prior to washing it to prevent contaminating yourself. Perform hand hygiene with soap and water right after handling dirty laundry. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

#### **Eating Utensils**

Eating utensils and dishes should be washed either in a dishwasher or by hand with water and soap. Any paper plates and plastic utensils used by an infectious individual should be disposed immediately. These should be double bagged after using and placed in the garbage.



## **Cleaning**

Viruses have the potential to live up to 48 hours on hard surfaces, so **regular cleaning with common household cleaners is recommended on all surfaces.**

### *How to Clean Surfaces*

'High-touch' surfaces, such as doorknobs, light switches; hand rails, telephones, computer keyboards, and sink handles should be cleaned at least twice daily.

"Low-touch" surfaces, such as floors, walls, ceilings, mirrors and window sills require cleaning on a regular (but not necessarily daily) basis, or when soiling or spills occur.

**Proper cleaning of objects and hard surfaces will reduce the chance of spreading germs and viruses.** Keep hard surfaces such as kitchen countertops, desktops, bathroom surfaces, and bedside floors, clean and sanitary. The frequency of cleaning and sanitizing individual items or surfaces in a particular area or department depends on whether surfaces are:

- 'high-touch' or 'low-touch'
  - 'high touch areas" should be cleaned frequently as prevention and more so when there is an outbreak (more than twice a day)
- the type of activity taking place in the area and the risk of infection associated with it (e.g. washroom vs. meeting room)
  - areas such as the kitchen, washroom, bedrooms are high risk areas and should be cleaned frequently as prevention and more so when there is an outbreak (more than twice a day)
- the vulnerability of individuals in the particular situation
  - Many of our individuals, especially the elderly or individuals with compromised immune systems, are more vulnerable to infections and as such cleaning is essential to prevent illness
- the probability of body fluid contamination on surfaces in the area
  - kitchen, washroom and bedrooms are key areas to focus on

Remember to always start with a clean cloth and never re-use any cloths. Soak the cloth in the cleaning solution and then wipe food preparation areas, or objects. For smaller items, place the entire object into a container filled with the cleaning solution.



Follow the manufacturer's label instructions carefully when using purchased cleaners. Do not mix any cleaners unless labels clearly indicate that it is safe to do so. Pay attention to any hazard warnings for using personal protective items (such as gloves or masks).

Clean all items with soap or detergent, and water.  
Rinse items with clean water.

#### *For Disinfecting*

- Disinfectants are applied to a clean surface in order to kill disease causing germs
- Must have a drug identification number (DIN) if approved for use in Canada (common household bleach is the only exception)
- Always follow manufacturer's recommendations (FMR). Read label for direction on: dilution and mixing; personal protective equipment (PPE) needed (e.g., gloves, goggles); surfaces appropriate for use; contact time; and rinsing requirements

#### *Accel or Virox Wipes:*

If available and applicable, Accel Wipes or Virox Wipes may be used for individuals with acute infection. These wipes are used for **high level** disinfecting and will kill bacteria and viruses, including TB.

When a location has an outbreak of an infectious illness – Accel/Virox wipes should be used for the individual's room as well as any other shared area of the location (washroom etc.). Staff may also wish to use the wipes in high risk areas such as other washrooms in the location, kitchen, dining areas, and other rooms as deemed necessary. If the infectious individual is unable to stay in their room, Accel/Virox wipes are to be used throughout the location.

#### *Cleaning and disinfecting wipes:*

- Follow manufacturer's recommendations
- Wipes are not recommended as a routine cleaning/disinfectant tool
- They can be used for items that cannot be soaked and for small items that must be disinfected between uses
- Ensure the surface or item remains wet for the required contact time (additional wipes may be needed)
- Wipes must be kept wet and should be discarded if they become dry