

Puhastusekspert's advice for efficient cleaning and disinfection

These recommendations concern routine wet cleaning, and the cleaning of frequently-used premises and objects and frequently-touched surfaces (contact surfaces), as well as objects which are in public use, by using everyday household detergents and/or disinfectants (such as in accommodation establishments, passenger terminals, shopping centres, etc).

Presently, when disinfectants may not be widely available for large premises and surfaces, and are in addition not always necessary, the same results can be achieved with the help of efficient cleaning and commonly-used household detergents.

General hygiene advice:

1. **Wash hands regularly with soap and water:** upon arriving home, after using the toilet, before eating, after coming into contact with a potentially contaminated object or surface, etc.
2. Do not forget that **drying your hands** is a very important stage of hand-washing. Use disposable paper towels for this purpose.
3. Only use sanitising substances if it is very likely that surfaces have been contaminated with the virus and if no other cleaning techniques can be used.

Clean efficiently

1. **Air rooms** to ensure adequate ventilation.
2. **Identify contact surfaces** (such as door handles, railings, elevator buttons, switches, chair armrests (top and bottom), surfaces in toilets and bathrooms, etc), tour the rooms and find any **contaminated objects**. Think about and pick out the various places in a room which may have been touched by people. Experts claim that over 90% of the contact surfaces of soap and paper towel dispensers are dirty (on the bottom and on pumps and/or buttons). The sides of doors and the area around the door handle are also often left without having received proper care, as well as the bottoms and backrests of chairs at schools and the items and tools which are in common use in offices (eg. keyboards, staplers), VR glasses at gaming centres, kitchen appliances, telephones, etc.
3. **Wet cleaning** is necessary for removing dirt from surfaces (including micro-organisms). It is important to keep in mind the fact that all surfaces which require more than thirty seconds to dry must be **dried separately**. If surfaces are left to dry naturally, residual dirt, as well as micro-organisms, may remain on the surfaces.
4. Everyday cleaning methods are fully adequate for the task at hand. For example, a clean microfibre cloth which has been moistened with clean water may be used. The cloth must be wet enough (but not too wet) to bind enough dirt, and cleaned surfaces must be scrubbed properly. Mechanical work - wiping - has an important role in removing dirt. Surfaces must be scrubbed sufficiently. By only gently wiping the surface, a significant amount of the dirt and micro-organisms on the surface may be left behind. Based on previously-conducted studies, this method makes it possible to adequately remove infectious viruses, with the result that there will be no direct or further need to use disinfectants for the prevention of viruses spreading.

5. When it comes to cleaning smooth surfaces, the cloth (such as a microfibre cloth) may only be moistened with water. In the case of porous surfaces, though, a slightly alkaline (pH 8-9) detergent solution provides the best results, including in the case of using disposable cleaning cloths.
6. Keep in mind the following information when assessing whether your cloth is wet enough:

An insufficiently wet cloth: using such a cloth may not leave the surface damp, although if indeed the surface is left damp, it will dry in just one to three seconds. This method is suitable for removing dust.

Damp cloth: this leaves the surface slightly damp, but that surface will dry in no more than thirty seconds. If it takes the surface longer to dry then the cloth is too wet and requires drying out. Wet cleaning is a good method for cleaning contact surfaces, but adequate scrubbing is also necessary, and it is advisable to use a micro-fibre cloth.

Wet cloth: this requires drying out. A wet cloth should only be used if it is necessary to 'soak' dirt off the surface. A damp cloth is sufficiently wet for removing lighter dirt. A wet microfibre cloth may lose its mechanical cleaning properties and will therefore become less efficient.
7. **Clean** contact surfaces and easily-soiled objects **more frequently** than other surfaces and objects, and ensure that this is done **regularly**. In public premises which are used by large numbers of people, it is advisable to clean contact surfaces on a highly regular schedule, such as every two to four hours for example. Keep in mind the fact that a surface which is visually clean may not be free of micro-organisms. Any surface which is visibly soiled provides an especially good refuge for micro-organisms.
8. Thoroughly clean the cleaning equipment itself each time it has been used. Wash textile cleaning supplies in a washing machine at a high temperature. In the case of a domestic washing machine, use a temperature setting of between 65-90°C. Such textile cleaning supplies will not be sufficiently clean if they are washing manually in a bucket of water or under running water.
9. If necessary, appropriate disinfectants or biocides (see the advice below) may also be used when it comes to cleaning sanitary facilities (such as toilets and bathrooms).
10. Attention should be paid to folding cloths and to using an aseptic cleaning method, ie. the process of moving from a cleaner surface in the direction of a more heavily-soiled surface, turning the cloth around when cleaning different surfaces, and so on. The aim is to collect dirt, not to spread it.
11. The handling and path of various cleaning textiles must be thought through to prevent contamination of those supplies before use. Different cleaning tools should be used for cleaning different premises in order to prevent any potential spreading of the dirt, including microbes. This means that a separate cloth should be used for cleaning each room in an office (as well as for cleaning each separate surface or desk, if possible). This is more efficient than spraying a disinfectant on the premises or surfaces, or wiping down with a cloth which has been moistened with a disinfectant.
12. Do not use objects which are easily soiled or require frequent cleaning if possible. Empty any waste bins when they are no more than three quarters full and clean the bins after they have been emptied.

General advice for cleaning and sanitising any premises which may have been visited by anyone who has a confirmed or suspected case of infection where there may be a risk of the surroundings having been contaminated by infectious bodily fluids

1. Clean premises and surfaces thoroughly, as described above. Only use sanitising substances if it is very likely that the surfaces have been contaminated with pathogens and if no other cleaning techniques can be used.
2. Cleaning equipment must itself be easy-to-clean and must be cleaned after it has been used to clean any premises and before starting the job of cleaning any other premises. If reusable cleaning supplies cannot be washed in a washing machine, disposable cloths should be used.
3. Reusable cleaning supplies and textile supplies must be washed at a temperature of at least 90°C. If hot water cannot be used due to the characteristics of the fibres, special chemicals should be used for washing textile supplies (such as bleach or detergents which contain sodium hypochlorite or special detergents for textiles).
4. Secretions and secretion stains (such as those from spit, vomit, blood, or excrement) must be wiped up with a disposable cloth. Collect any waste which is generated during the course of cleaning operations into a bag which can be sealed and disposed of as general waste.
5. Any premises and surfaces which may have been contaminated with pathogens must be thoroughly cleaned before reusing. For extra safety, surfaces may be sanitised after cleaning with a disinfectant which is known to be effective against the suspected pathogen.
6. In the case of SARS-CoV-2 pathogens, for example, it is advisable to use disinfectants which contain either 0.1-0.5% of sodium hypochlorite or at least 70% of ethanol (the substances must be left on the surface for at least one full minute) or other (efficient) active ingredients.

What should you keep in mind when using disinfectants?

1. The information on the packaging must be read carefully, and the user instructions must be followed as different disinfectants need different contact times in order to ensure a sufficient disinfecting effect.
2. Only use sanitising substances if it is very likely that the surfaces have been contaminated with the virus and if no other cleaning techniques can be used.
3. Skilful wet cleaning is the most efficient method of removing microbes if premises and surfaces are sprayed with a disinfectant or wiped down with a cloth which has been moistened with a disinfectant.
4. Disinfectants may damage various surfaces. Following completion of the disinfection process, surfaces must be rewashed and dried in order to remove the disinfectant from surfaces and to prevent potential damage being suffered by the surfaces.

What can cleaning operatives do to protect themselves?

1. Easy-to-clean clothing and footwear should be worn. When cleaning premises which have been used by an individual who is either confirmed or suspected of

having been infected, a non-impregnable apron or similar form of clothing should be worn for extra protection.

2. Disposable gloves and protective gloves should be worn, preferably gloves with long sleeves (such as nitrile gloves of a thickness of at least 0.3mm which are compliant with En-374-1). A sufficient volume of protective gloves should be made available, and disposable gloves should be exchanged at an appropriate frequency.
3. Double protective gloves must be worn when cleaning and sanitising sanitary facilities if necessary. Thin, disposable gloves must be worn under protective gloves which protect the skin from the chemicals which are being used. The efficiency of the gloves in terms of the protection they offer against those chemicals which are being used should always be checked.
4. In the event of a disinfectant being used which contains chloride, respiratory protective equipment must also be used. Please note that you must read and carefully follow the user instructions which are provided on the label.
5. Gloves and other protective equipment must be chosen by basing any such selection on the information which is provided on the chemical data sheet. When cleaning premises which have been used by a confirmed or suspected case of infection, respiratory protective equipment (FFP2/ 3), face masks, and protective goggles must be worn if splashes are going to be generated during cleaning operations. Tools must be carefully cleaned.
6. Protective equipment must be removed without touching the contaminated sides of such equipment.
7. After removing protective gloves or other protective equipment, hands must be washed in warm water and with soap, as soon as possible or, if this is not possible, an alcohol-based hand sanitiser must be used. After carrying out any cleaning operations, the individual who carried out those operations must wash themselves thoroughly, preferably by showering and using antiseptic washing products.
8. In workplaces and public spaces, individuals must be appointed who will be responsible for cleaning easily-soiled objects. There are objects in many businesses which the cleaning service provider is not required to clean and which are actually rarely cleaned in-house either (such as sticker guns, various office supplies in medical institutions, the wheels and lower parts of medical equipment, etc).

Additional information

The Health Board's information about disinfectants:

www.terviseamet.ee/et/teadlik-desinfitseerimisvahendi-kasutaja.

Information from Puhastusekspert about cleaning contact surfaces:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=AO9VOV2PcVU

(in Russian: www.youtube.com/watch?v=5CoAGPjHroU).