Using Disinfectants to Control the COVID-19 Virus

This guidance is for the public and professionals to control the COVID-19 virus on surfaces. The coronavirus named "SARS-CoV-2" is the cause of "COVID-19" in people.

This information applies to sprays, **surface wipes**, and other liquids. You may see them called "**antimicrobials**",, "disinfectants", or "biocides" on product labels.

Antimicrobial Products List

There are currently no EPA-registered disinfectants that specifically include the SARS-CoV-2 virus on the product label. Refer to the following list from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for products that control the virus:

List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2
https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2

Using products effectively:

- **To kill the virus, the surface must stay wet for the entire time on the label. Look for "contact time" or "dwell time".**
- Surface wipes can dry out during use. They must remain wet to be effective.
- Each product has only been shown to work where the label says it can be used. Look for **"use sites"** on the label.
- Disinfectants may not work on all surfaces. Follow the label carefully. Examples of surface types are listed in Table 1 below.
- "Cleaning" wipes do not kill viruses. They do not make claims to disinfect and are not registered by the U.S. EPA.

Table 1. Porosity of common household materials[1,2,3,4]

Porous		Semi-porous		Non-porous
Carpeting	Upholstered furniture	Wood	Hardwood floor	Some tiles
Clothing and fabrics	Leather	Drywall	Linoleum	Some sealed countertops
Bedding and pillows	Wall insulation	Tile grout	Concrete	Glass
Mattresses	Ceiling tile			Metal

Consider these steps to reduce your risk when using disinfectants:

- To avoid chemical exposure when using disinfectants, follow the label's "precautionary statements". If no label guidance is provided, consider wearing gloves, eye protection, shoes with socks, and long sleeves/pants.
- Keep children, pets, and other people away during the application until the product is dry and there is no odor.
- Open windows and use fans to ventilate. Step away from odors if they become too strong.
- Wash your hands after using any disinfectant, including surface wipes.
- Keep lids tightly closed when not in use. Spills and accidents are more likely to happen when containers are open.
- Do not allow children to use disinfectant wipes. Keep cleaners and disinfectants out of reach from children and pets.
- Throw away disposable items like gloves and masks after use. They cannot be cleaned.
- Do not use disinfectant wipes to clean hands or as baby wipes.

Additional Resources:

1. **Guidance to Registrants: Process for Making Claims Against Emerging Viral Pathogens not on EPA-Registered Disinfectant Labels** - U.S. EPA
2. **Interim guidance for environmental cleaning in non-healthcare facilitates exposed to SARS-CoV-2** – European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control

For questions about disinfectants and other pesticides:
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1. Mysz, A.; Martinez, J. Indoor Carbaryl Dust Cleanup; EPA Region 5: Chicago, IL, 2011.
2. Emergency or Incident Response. National Pesticide Applicator Certification Core Manual; National Association of State Departments of Agriculture Research Foundation: Arlington, VA, 2014, pp 144–145.
3. Johnson, M. Letter to Steve Renninger, On-Scene Coordinator, US EPA: Documentation for Previous Verbal Consultations that ATSDR Provided to the US EPA and the Cincinnati Department of Health Regarding Excessive Spray of Malathion in Several Residences; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry: Chicago, IL, 2011.
4. OSHA Fact Sheet: Mold Hazards during Disaster Cleanup; U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration: Washington, DC, 2013.

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