



## AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF POISON CONTROL CENTERS

04/28/2020

# ALERT...

### Using Disinfectants: COVID-19

America's 55 poison control centers stand ready to help you get through this unprecedented time. In response to COVID-19, our medical experts are available to answer questions, ease concerns and provide resources that relate to preventing poison exposures to commonly used products, including hand sanitizers, cleaning products, and medicines.

#### DO NOT USE DISINFECTANT WIPES ON YOUR SKIN/BODY

Disinfectants may vary by brand but their purpose is to disinfect hard surfaces such as countertops, floors, bathroom fixtures, key boards, and phones. When surfaces are dirty they should first be cleaned with soap and water. Then, the use of a disinfectant wipe can help kill germs such as COVID-19. Read the directions carefully, most times the hard surface needs to stay wet with the disinfectant for several minutes to ensure all germs are killed.

Disinfectants are **not intended to be used on the skin or in the body** because they can irritate the skin or cause toxic effects if swallowed. As our curious little ones like to learn and explore—Remember to keep disinfectants up high and out of sight. If you find your child has explored the disinfectants, do not panic and call your local Poison Center for advice (1-800-222-1222).

#### KNOW THESE TERMS AND FOLLOW EXPERT ADVISE TO AVOID INTERNET "CLAIMS"

Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting – Know the difference. Cleaning removes germs and dirt from surfaces, but does not necessarily kill germs. Disinfecting works by using chemicals that kill germs after cleaning. Sanitizing lowers the number of germs to a safe level depending on the process and can be done by cleaning or disinfecting.

Actual disinfectants should never be used on surfaces that come into direct contact with food. Although some products, like sanitizers, can be used in this way, it is important to read and follow package instructions. For information about which product to use when, **follow expert advice**, and do not create your own blend of products. The CDC has a great website to learn more about this topic:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

#### TIPS TO PREVENT HARMFUL EXPOSURES

- ✓ Do not ingest disinfectants.
- ✓ Read and follow product label instructions before each use.
- ✓ Do not mix cleaning products.
- ✓ Practice safe storage habits, keep products up and away.
- ✓ Call the Poison Help hotline at 1-800-222-1222 immediately. If you have questions or suspect a poisoning.

Be prepared in an emergency to get free, confidential, and expert help 24/7/365:

- **Text** - POISON to 797979 to save the Poison Help contact number into your mobile phone.
- **Save** - the Poison Help number, 1-800-222-1222, in your mobile phone.
- **Display** - the Poison Help contact number throughout your home.
- **Get Info via:**

*Web:* [www.aapcc.org](http://www.aapcc.org)

*Twitter:* <https://twitter.com/AAPCC>

*Facebook:* <https://www.facebook.com/aapcc/>

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