



Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection for Influenza QUICK GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS

Infectious Materials

Depending on the specific type, viruses have the potential to be present in almost all body secretions (including saliva, nasal fluid, blood, cerebrospinal fluid, and feces). Environmental surfaces can harbor viruses when contaminated with a body secretion from infectious persons.

Cleaning and Disinfection

Normal cleaning procedures and frequencies are effective and should be used during influenza outbreaks for surfaces to minimize potential exposures. Prioritization during influenza outbreaks should be given to commonly touched surfaces. These surfaces should be cleaned more frequently during outbreaks, and standard cleaning products can be used. Frequently touched electronic or computer equipment can be cleaned by wiping with sanitizing cloths.

Commonly touched surfaces include but are not limited to:

- Door knobs or handles
- Hand rails
- Shared computer keyboards and mice
- Shared counters or desks
- Sink faucet handles and hand contact areas of drinking fountains
- Remote controls, equipment button panels, and handheld electronics

Suitable Disinfectants

Soap and hot water can be an effective viral disinfectant. In addition, influenza A viruses can be effectively killed by many common disinfectants including bleach or ammonia based cleaning products. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) maintains a list commercial disinfecting products that are effective against influenza A viruses for hard non-porous surfaces (<http://www.epa.gov/oppad001/influenza-a-product-list.pdf>). Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for use, dilution, and contact time.

It is recommended that schools check to ensure the cleaning products and/or active ingredients they normally use, to be sure that they are effective against influenza A viruses in advance and change if needed.

If an EPA listed product is not available an effective disinfecting solution can be made using bleach (sodium hypochlorite).

- Bleach solutions should be prepared following manufacturer instructions.
- Bleach is inactivated by organic material (body secretions, vomit, blood, feces). Surfaces must be cleaned before disinfection will be effective.
- Bleach solutions degrade over time, should be kept in a closed container away from sunlight, and must be made fresh daily.
- Do not mix bleach with other cleaning products.

Specific Cleaning Guidance

- ***School buses*** – Recommendations for cleaning procedures are the same as above. Focus should be given to more frequent cleaning of commonly touched surfaces like hand rails. Otherwise normal cleaning procedures and frequencies should continue to be used.
- ***Playground equipment*** – Emphasis should be placed on teaching students proper hand hygiene practices (frequent hand washing and keeping hands away from the face) to reduce the risk of potential exposure.
- ***Musical Instruments*** – Emphasis should be placed on normal care and maintenance of shared instruments and to avoid sharing mouthpieces and reeds. Additionally frequent hand washing should be reinforced.

For more information on novel influenza, visit our website at: www.idph.state.ia.us