**Household Chemicals: Keeping Your Family Safe During COVID-19**

Proper cleaning, disinfecting, and handwashing are important to prevent transmission of COVID-19. However, chemicals in some products can be harmful to your health. Protect your family from both COVID-19 and chemical exposures by choosing safer products and practices.

**Chemicals in common disinfectants, cleaners, and soaps can harm your health.**

Chemicals in cleaners and soaps enter the body through breathing (inhalation), ingestion, and through the skin. Children are especially at risk from harmful effects of cleaning products.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breathing problems</th>
<th>Skin and eye irritation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chemicals in cleaners and disinfectants pollute indoor air and can cause or worsen asthma and respiratory problems.</td>
<td>Skin and eyes can itch and burn when exposed to cleaning chemicals.</td>
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<th>Hormone disruption</th>
<th>Infertility</th>
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<td>Cleaning products and soaps contain chemicals like fragrance and triclosan which interfere with hormones that control many important body functions.</td>
<td>Some disinfectants are shown to impair reproduction in animal studies.</td>
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<th>Antibacterial resistance</th>
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<td>Antibacterial chemicals added to soaps and cleaners are not effective against COVID-19 or other viruses. Overuse of these chemicals contributes to the creation of germs that aren't killed by drugs.</td>
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</table>

**Clean and disinfect safely.**

- Open windows when using cleaners and disinfectants.
- Spray disinfectant on a cloth or use wipes. Dispose of them in a lidded trash can to reduce the risk of breathing in chemicals.
- Never mix cleaning chemicals.
- Avoid use of cleaning chemicals around children.
- Always read label information and follow manufacturer’s instructions.
- Do not use cleaning products on or around food.
- Keep cleaning products labeled and out of reach of children.
Choose safer products:

Cleaners and Disinfectants

Choose:

Disinfectants on EPA list N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) with one of the following ingredients:

- Hydrogen peroxide
- Thymol
- Alcohol (e.g. ethanol/ethyl alcohol, isopropyl alcohol/isopropanol)
- Lactic acid
- Citric acid
- Caprylic (Octanoic) acid

Green Seal Certified, EcoLogo, or EPA Safer Choice products

Avoid:

- Bleach (Sodium hypochlorite)
- Quaternary Ammoniums (benzalkonium chloride, benzethonium chloride, ammonium chlorides)
- Fragrance
- Mixing cleaners or chemicals
- Foggers and aerosol sprays that increase risk of inhalational exposures
- Products not proven to be effective against COVID-19 such as vinegar

Hand soaps and sanitizers:

Choose:

Plain soap and water
Fragrance free
Alcohol-based sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol (ethyl alcohol or isopropyl alcohol)
Wash hands according to guidelines

Avoid:

Added antibacterials such as triclosan, triclocarban, and quaternary ammoniums (benzalkonium chloride, benzethonium chloride, ammonium chlorides). These are no more effective than plain soap and water.

- Fragrance
- Methanol

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