

Disinfectant Fact Sheet



What is the difference between cleaning and disinfection?

Cleaning is always the **first step**

- All surfaces must be thoroughly cleaned before disinfection
- Physically removes dirt and most germs from surfaces, but does not destroy germs

Disinfection is always the **second step**

- Disinfectants are applied after the surface has been cleaned
- Is the process that destroys most germs



Disinfectant Wipes

- Most are combined as cleaners and disinfectants in one solution
- If used, surfaces must still be cleaned and disinfected. To do this, use two separate wipes:
 1. Wipe surface with the first wipe to clean and discard wipe, then
 2. Get a new/second wipe and wipe surface to disinfect
 3. Read product label to determine contact time (i.e. how long the surface must remain wet to achieve disinfection and kill germs)
- Discard wipes if they are no longer wet and have become dry in their packaging



Using Bleach as a Disinfectant

- Bleach can be mixed with water to make an effective disinfectant
- To prepare a bleach disinfectant solution, mix the following:
 - 250 mL (1 cup) of water + 5 mL (1 teaspoon) bleach, or
 - 1 litre of water (4 cups) + 20 mL (4 teaspoons) bleach
- Allow the bleach solution to remain wet on the surface for **1 minute**
- A fresh bleach solution must be made daily
- Label the bottle as "Bleach Disinfectant"
- Bleach products should never be mixed with other cleaning products



What not to use as a disinfectant

- Hand sanitizers are not intended to be used as disinfectants and are only approved for use on hands
- **70% alcohol** requires a 10-minute contact time to ensure appropriate disinfection. Because alcohol evaporates quickly, it makes achieving the contact time difficult.



Electronics

- **Follow manufacturer's instructions** for the cleaning and disinfection of electronic items (i.e. pin pads, keyboards, touchscreens, etc).
- Shared electronic items should be cleaned and disinfected between users, and at end of each shift
- Consider putting a wipeable cover on electronics, which will make cleaning and disinfection easier



Health Canada approved disinfectants

- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Health Canada has allowed certain disinfectants that do not fully meet the regulatory requirements but are still safe to use, to be sold in Canada (e.g. have an EPA number instead of a DIN). These disinfectants can be found on the Disinfectants accepted under [COVID-19 interim measure list](#).
- **Always follow manufacturer's instructions located on the product label**



What to Look for on the Product Label

Type: Must indicate that the product is a “disinfectant”

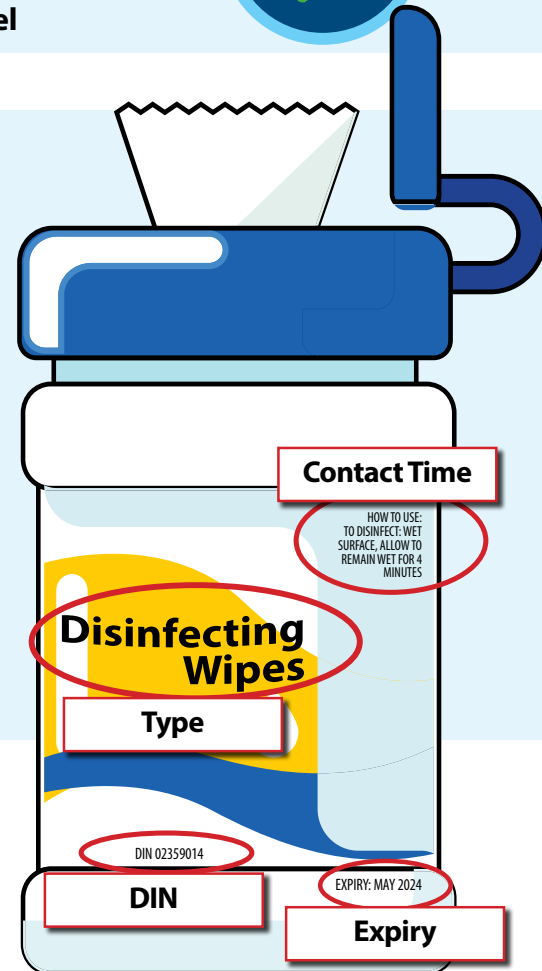
DIN: Drug Identification Number which means the product was approved by Health Canada

Contact Time: The length of time the disinfectant must remain wet on the surface to kill germs

Expiry Date: Do not use disinfectants that are past the expiry date as their effectiveness can no longer be verified

*Always read and follow manufacturer's instructions for safe use of disinfectants (e.g., wear gloves, use in well-ventilated area, etc.)

*If using gloves, wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer after removing gloves



Sources

[Durham Health Department - Cleaning and Disinfection Fact Sheet](#)

[Health Canada - COVID-19 - Cleaning products and bleach](#)



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Durham Health Connection Line
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