

# Cleaning and Disinfection

## Why is it important?

Frequent cleaning and disinfection helps prevent the spread of germs that may cause illness.

## What is it?

**Cleaning** is an important first step because it physically removes dirt, organic matter, and most germs from surfaces, but does not kill germs that may remain. All surfaces must be thoroughly cleaned before disinfection. This ensures that germs are not hidden from the disinfectant when it is applied.

**Disinfection** is the process that destroys most disease-causing germs that remain on surfaces.

## How often should it be done?

**Routinely** - for frequently or high touched surfaces; shared surfaces / items.

**More often** - when illness levels have increased.

**Immediately** - when surfaces are contaminated with blood or body fluids.

## How is it done?

What	Why	How
Step 1: <b>Clean</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To physically remove dirt, organic matter, and most germs before disinfection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use detergent / soap, water, clean brush / cloth, and scrub action / friction</li> </ul>
Step 2: <b>Rinse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To remove soap and dirt residue</li> <li>To make disinfectants effective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use clean water and clean cloth</li> </ul>
Step 3: <b>Disinfect</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To destroy disease causing germs that remain on surfaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully cover all surfaces or fully immerse tools in disinfectant solution at proper strength for a required contact time</li> </ul>

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# What do I look for?

Read the label and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Things to consider when buying cleaning and disinfection products:

**Type:** Is the product just a cleaner, disinfectant or a combination?

**DIN:** Drug Identification Number issued by Health Canada for all approved disinfectants.

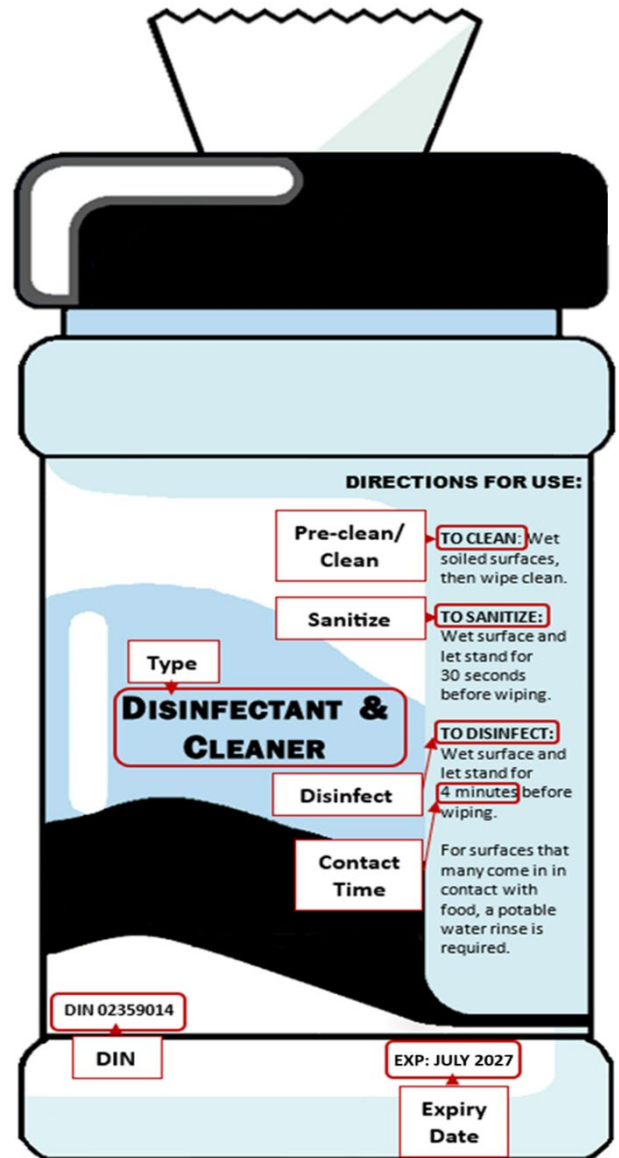
**Pre-clean / Clean:** Must remove all dirt before sanitizing or disinfecting.

**Sanitize:** A lower kill level of some germs.

**Disinfect:** A higher kill level of more types of germs.

**Contact Time:** The time required for the disinfectant to be left wet on the surface to kill the germs.

**Expiry Date:** The date after which the manufacture recommends that the product not be used due to its shelf-life stability.



For more information on how to read a label. Please see our [Read the Label Poster](#).

## Can household bleach be used as a disinfectant?

Household bleach can be diluted with water and is an effective and inexpensive disinfectant.

The product labels will inform you of the intended use of the bleach and whether it can be used as a disinfectant. Remember to always follow manufacturer's instructions.

## More information can be obtained from

Durham Health Connection Line  
905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729

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