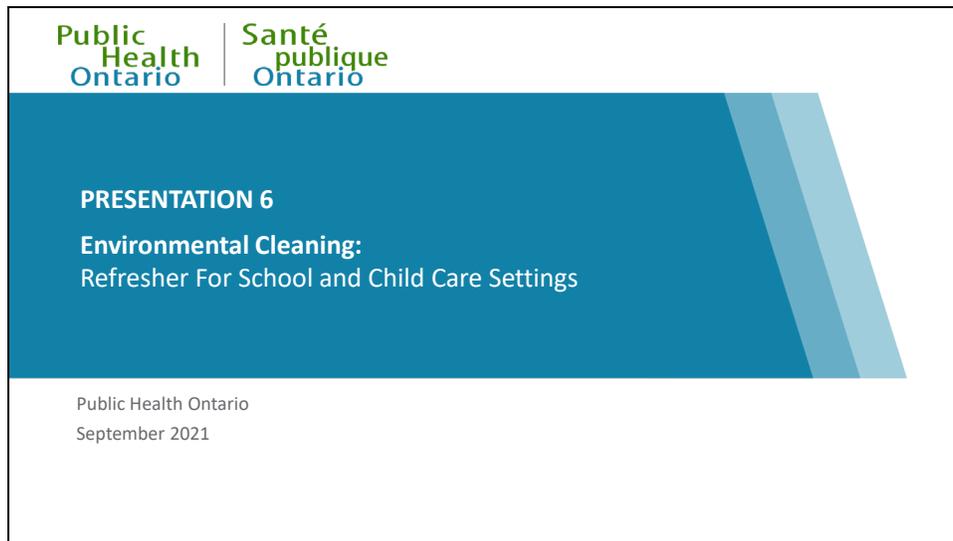


Presentations for Schools and Child Care Settings: **Environmental Cleaning**

Transcript: Presentation 6 of 6

September 2021

Slide 1



This presentation is a review of environmental cleaning for the school and child care settings.

Slide 2

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Slide 3

Objectives

- To identify what surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected to prevent the transmission of COVID-19
- To review considerations when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces in school and child care settings

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There are two objectives for this presentation:

- To identify what surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected to prevent the transmission of COVID-19
- To review considerations when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces in school and child care settings

Slide 4

Can COVID-19 Be Transmitted by Fomites (Surfaces, Objects, Food)?

- COVID-19 is transmitted primarily via droplets and aerosols during close, unprotected contact
- Although it may be possible that people can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes (fomite transmission), this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads



Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario), Schools and COVID-19 [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2020 [cited 2021 Mar 19]. Available from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/sch/2020/12/covid-19-faq-schools.pdf?la=en>

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Can COVID-19 be transmitted by fomites – in other words surfaces, objects or food?

- COVID-19 is transmitted primarily via droplets and aerosols during close, unprotected contact.
- Although it may be possible that people can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes (fomite transmission), this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.
- However, fomites can contribute to the transmission of other respiratory and gastrointestinal pathogens (e.g. RSV, norovirus). Therefore, environmental cleaning remains an important infection prevention and control measure in schools.

Slide 5

Cleaning and Disinfection: Points To Remember

- Environmental cleaning is one measure in a bundle of measures used to prevent transmission of COVID-19. No single measure should be relied on by itself
 - Cleaning and disinfection are two separate processes. Cleaning must be done before disinfection, in order for disinfection to be effective
 - Personal protective equipment (PPE) may be required when using certain products (per manufacturer's instructions and safety data sheet)
 - Clean hands before and after performing cleaning and disinfection.

Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Best practices for environmental cleaning for prevention and control of infections in all health care settings [Internet]. 3rd ed. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2018 [cited 2020 Oct 28]. Available from: https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/bp/2018/bp-environmental-cleaning.pdf?_a=en

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This slide reviews a few points to remember with respect to environmental cleaning.

- It's important to note that environmental cleaning is one measure in a bundle of measures used to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. No single measure should be relied on by itself.
- Cleaning and disinfection are two separate processes. Cleaning must be done before disinfection, in order for disinfection to be effective
- When we speak about cleaning, this refers to the physical removal of foreign material (e.g., dust, soil) and organic material (e.g., blood, secretions, excretions, microorganisms). Cleaning physically removes rather than kills microorganisms. It is accomplished with water, detergents and mechanical action (e.g. scrubbing).
- The process of disinfection refers to the inactivation of disease-producing microorganisms. This is product specific and you should always follow instructions on the manufacturer labels

Slide 6

Cleaning and Disinfection

- Establish a regular cleaning schedule emphasizing high touch surfaces and washrooms
- Use appropriate products and ensure adequate contact time
- For effective disinfection to occur, the product must be in contact (remain wet) with the surface for a specific amount of time ("contact time") as specified in the manufacturer's instructions; contact time varies between products
 - When cleaning classrooms or other spaces used by an individual with symptoms of COVID-19, wear appropriate PPE (medical masks e.g. surgical/procedural, gowns, gloves, eye protection)

Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): cleaning and disinfection for public settings [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2021 [cited 2021 Aug 11]. Available from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning.pdf>

Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Schools and COVID-19 [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2020 [cited 2021 Mar 19]. Available from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/sch/2020/12/covid-19-faq-schools.pdf?la=en>

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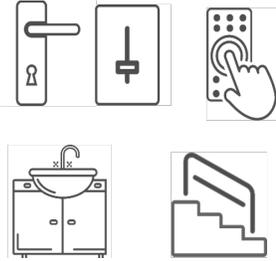
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- Cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces is a key step in infection prevention and control.
- High touch surfaces are those that are more likely to be touched or handled, including light switches, doorknobs, desks, handrails and faucets.
- Surfaces that are frequently touched are more likely to become contaminated, and are to be cleaned on a regular cleaning schedule and more frequently, if the surface appears visibly soiled or is a surface that is more frequently touched.
- Use cleaning and disinfectant products according to the manufacturer's instructions for use (MIFU) following direction for dilution and contact time. For effective disinfection to occur, the product must be in contact with the surface for a specific amount of time ("contact time") before being wiped away. For most disinfectants, the surface should remain wet for the required contact time. Ensure you apply sufficient product and allow product to dry on the surface (don't wipe it dry).
- The MIFU for a particular cleaning/disinfecting product, including wearing any recommended PPE, should always be followed, in order to protect staff from potential exposure to infection during cleaning, or from potential exposure to the cleaning and disinfecting product.
- Consider a sign off paper (virtual or otherwise) documenting when the last time the washroom or other communal rooms are used. This can be helpful (for quality control).

Slide 7

What are the Surfaces I Should Clean and Disinfect?

- All common areas should be cleaned and disinfected regularly (e.g. minimum daily)
- Clean and disinfect items/surfaces touched by a person who develops signs/symptoms of COVID-19 as soon as possible.
- Incorporate practice of regular hand hygiene into activities involving shared items (e.g. before and after activities)



Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Best practices for environmental cleaning for prevention and control of infections in all health care settings [Internet]. 3rd ed. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2018 [cited 2021 Mar 19]. Available from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/b/2018/bp-environmental-cleaning.pdf?la=en>

Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). COVID-19 preparedness and prevention in elementary and secondary (K-12) schools - checklist orientation [Webinar]. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2020 [presented 2020 Oct 23; cited 2021 Mar 19]. Available from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/event-presentations/2020/covid-19-ipac-preparedness-prevention-k-12-oct-23.pdf?la=en>

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This slide provides an overview of the surfaces that should be cleaned and disinfected:

- All common areas should be cleaned and disinfected regularly (e.g. minimum daily)
- Clean and disinfect items/surfaces touched by a person who develops signs/symptoms of COVID-19 as soon as possible.
- As risk of infection related to sharing equipment (e.g. toys, gym equipment) is low, emphasize regular hand hygiene to reduce the risk of infection related to shared equipment.

Slide 8

What About Other Items Not Easily Cleaned?

- Studies show that virus levels on surfaces decline over time naturally.
- Choose items and toys that can be cleaned and disinfected easily.
- Incorporate regular hand hygiene into activities if using items/toys that are not easily cleaned and disinfected.
- Quarantining paper products (e.g. books, schoolwork) is not required.
- Furniture made from soft, porous material or fabric (e.g. fabric chair) should be cleaned or vacuumed on a regular basis (e.g. weekly) and steam cleaned when stained or visibly soiled.

Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Best practices for environmental cleaning for prevention and control of infections in all health care settings [Internet]. 3rd ed. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2018 [cited 2021 Mar 19]. Available from: https://www.publichealthontario.ca/_media/documents/h/2018/bp-environmental-cleaning.pdf?lang=en

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What do you do with items that can't be cleaned easily?

- Direct contact with respiratory droplets of an infected person is the primary means of COVID-19 transmission.
- Transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19 via fomites, while theoretically possible, is unlikely.
- Studies show that levels of the SARS COV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 infection decline on surfaces over time naturally
- Choose items and toys that can be cleaned and disinfected easily. If using items that are not easily cleaned and disinfected, incorporate regular hand hygiene into activities. This also applies to paper products, where hand hygiene before and after shared use can be recommended instead of quarantining paper products (e.g. books, schoolwork). Paper products are unlikely to be significant source of transmission and quarantining can impact access to learning resources.
- Furniture made from soft, porous material or fabric should be cleaned or vacuumed on a regular basis (e.g. weekly) and steam cleaned when stained or visibly soiled.

Slide 9

For more information ...

Public Health Ontario resources:

- [Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections in All Health Care Settings, 3rd Edition](#)
- [COVID-19 Preparedness and Prevention in Elementary and Secondary \(K-12\) Schools Checklist](#)
- [How To Protect Yourself from COVID-19](#)

Other resources:

- [Health Canada. Drug Product Database Online Query](#)
- [Health Canada. Hard-surface Disinfectants and Hand Sanitizers \(COVID-19\): List of Disinfectants with Evidence for Use Against COVID-19](#)
- [Ontario. Ministry of Education. COVID-19: Health, safety and operational guidance for schools \(2021-2022\)](#)

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If you would like more information, please see the list of resources here.

Slide 10

How Did We Do?



PHO would appreciate your thoughts on these presentations.

Please visit PHO's school resources webpage to access and complete a short survey.

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PHO would appreciate your thoughts on these refresher presentations. Please visit PHO's school resources webpage to access and complete a short survey.

Slide 11

For More Information About This Presentation, Contact:

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If you have questions, please email communications@oahpp.ca. Thank you!