



# PUBLIC HEALTH NOTES

FEBRUARY 2021  
VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2

## *Protecting Patients and Health Care Workers*



### COVID-19 CONSIDERATIONS

- Mask use is **mandatory** within 2 metres of another individual. Special consideration should be given in an office setting, as unintentional contact with coworkers remains a risk.
- Primary care providers are encouraged to continue with virtual and/or telephone consultations, when and where appropriate.
- In-person care is essential for certain conditions and some patients cannot fully benefit from virtual care. Primary care providers should continue to exercise clinical judgement to determine whether an in-person visit is necessary.
- For patients who screen *negative*, in-person care must be provided using a surgical mask. Eye protection must be considered based on risk assessment.
- For patients who screen *positive*, in-person care may be provided following Droplet/Contact precautions using mask, eye protection, gown and gloves.

### CLEANING & DISINFECTING

**Cleaning:** physically removes, rather than kills, visible soiling (dust, blood, mucus). It is completed with water, detergent and friction.

**Disinfecting:** kills viruses and bacteria.

- ☒ All visibly soiled surfaces must be cleaned before disinfected.
- ☒ Ensure multi-use equipment is not used with another client until it has been properly cleaned and disinfected. Do not re-use single use items.
- ☒ Regular cleaning and disinfecting logs are encouraged with the responsibility for cleaning clearly assigned.

#### Recommended Cleaning Frequencies

<b>Shared Equipment</b> (stethoscopes, bp cuffs, otoscopes)	Between each patient
<b>Horizontal Surfaces</b> (counters, tables)	After a person presented with respiratory symptoms leaves and at least twice daily
<b>Frequently touched surfaces</b> (doorknobs, light switches, telephones, keyboards/mice, pens, charts, cell phones, toys)	At least twice daily
<b>General cleaning of exam room</b> (chairs, tables, floors)	At least twice daily





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## TIPS AND TRICKS

- Clean visibly soiled surfaces before disinfecting (unless otherwise stated on product)
- Follow product instructions for dilution and wet contact time
- Ready-to-use wipes and pre-made solutions can be used
- Bleach mixtures are required to be mixed daily
- WHMIS sheets (SDS) must be available for all cleaning and disinfecting agents
- Protect your skin, use gloves
- Agents effective against COVID-19: bleach (sodium hypochlorite), hydrogen peroxide, quaternary ammonium compounds (QUATS)
- Ensure the product has an 8-digit DIN to indicate it has been approved for use by Health Canada

Health Canada Hard Surface Disinfectant

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19.html>

## Useful Resources

*Ministry of Health*  
COVID-19 Guidance:  
Primary Care Providers in a  
Community Setting

*Provincial Infectious  
Diseases Advisory Committee.* Best  
practices for environmental cleaning  
for prevention and control of  
infections in all health care settings.  
3rd ed.

*BC Centre for Disease Control*  
Environmental Cleaning and  
Disinfectants for Physicians'  
Offices