



**MIDDLESEX COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**  
**Division of Epidemiology and Public Health Preparedness**

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# Cleaning Guidelines for Flu

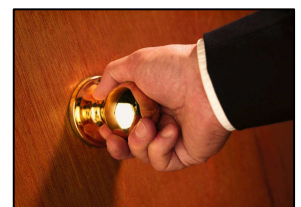
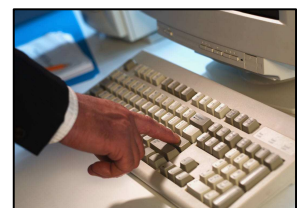
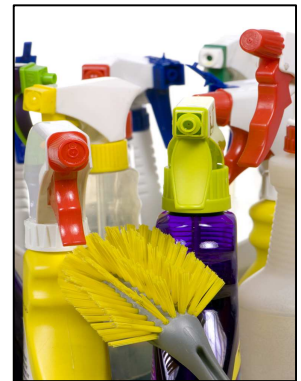
## How Flu Viruses Are Spread

- The main way that flu is spread is from person to person by coughs and sneezes
- Droplets from an infected person can come in contact with surfaces and spread if a person touches their eyes, mouth, or nose before washing their hands
- Flu viruses can live 2 to 8 hours on hard surfaces like tables, doorknobs, and desks
- It is **important** to :
  - Wash your hands often
  - Keep your hands away from your face
  - Keep surfaces clean to help prevent the spread of germs



## How to Clean and Disinfect Hard Surfaces in Offices and Schools

- Read warnings and instructions on the labels for using cleaning products, and other items used in cleaning such as: gloves, sponges, etc.
- Do not mix cleaning supplies unless the labels indicate it is safe to do so.
  - When you mix certain products, such as chlorine bleach and ammonia cleaners, it can be harmful and result in serious injury or death
- **Schools should regularly clean all areas and items that are more likely to have frequent hand contact** (for example, keyboards or desks) and also clean these areas immediately when visibly soiled. Use the cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas.
- Schools should ensure that custodial staff and others (such as classroom teachers) who use cleaners or disinfectants read and understand all instruction labels and understand safe and appropriate use. Instructional materials and training should be provided in languages other than English as locally appropriate. **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention does not believe any additional disinfection of environmental surfaces beyond the recommended routine cleaning is required.**
- Additional information on EPA-registered products effective against flu can be found at: [www.epa.gov/oppad001/influenza-a-product-list.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/oppad001/influenza-a-product-list.pdf)
- If a product for killing germs is not available, use bleach and water
  - Add 1 tablespoon of bleach to a quart of water
  - Use a cloth to apply this to surfaces and allow the surfaces to air dry
  - For a larger supply, add ¼ cup of bleach to a gallon of water
  - Wear gloves when using bleach



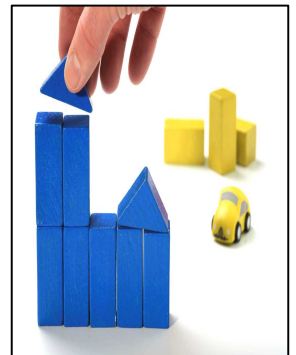
## Cleaning and Laundry

- Linens, eating utensils, and dishes used by those who are sick do not need to be cleaned separately, but these items should not be shared without proper washing first
- Clean linens (such as bed sheets and towels) by using laundry soap and tumble dry on a hot setting
- Avoid putting your arms around dirty laundry and carrying it; use a laundry basket
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth after touching dirty laundry
- Wash your hands after touching dirty laundry
- Eating utensils should be washed either in a dishwasher or by hand with warm water and soap



## Children's Toys

- Hard surface wood, plastic, and metal can be cleaned; follow the procedures outlined for hard surface cleaning and disinfection
- Sanitizer cloths can be used on smaller items
- Fabric toys (such as stuffed animals) should be washed according to the product's directions



## Waste Disposal Practices

- Toss tissues into waste baskets after they have been used
- Place waste baskets where they are easy to use
- Avoid touching used tissues and other waste when emptying waste baskets
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth after handling waste
- Wash your hands after emptying waste baskets
- Follow label instructions on the container for proper disposal of disinfectants and cleaning products



Information adapted from:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/schools/technicalreport.htm>

[http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/id\\_norovirusFS.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/id_norovirusFS.html)

United States Department of Health and Human Services

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/individual/panfacts.html>