

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

How to Prevent Skin Damage from Cleaning Products

Washing or sanitizing your hands and cleaning items and surfaces in your environment are recommended to reduce the spread of COVID-19. However, frequent cleaning can affect your skin. This fact sheet provides considerations on how to protect your skin to avoid potential harms caused by cleaning products.

General principles

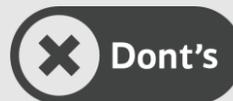
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains moisturizers if possible. Moisturizers are added to many alcohol-based hand sanitizers to keep skin nourished.
- Hands should be washed frequently with soap and water or may be cleaned with a pre-moistened towelette followed by hand sanitizer, if soap and water are not available. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer should not be used if hands are visibly soiled.
- Commonly used cleaners and disinfectants are effective against COVID-19.
 - Never mix different types of chemical products together.
 - Always follow the instructions on the label of chemical products.

How to protect your hands while keeping them clean



Do's

- Wash hands using soap and lukewarm water and rinse thoroughly.
- Pat your hands with a good quality paper towel or clean hand towel after hand washing until dry.
- Use moisturizing lotions often. Select alcohol-based hand sanitizer formulated with moisturizers or skin conditioners, if possible.



Dont's

- Do not use alcohol-based hand sanitizer immediately after washing hands with soap and water, as it will dry your skin.
- Do not apply soap without wetting your hands first.
- Do not put gloves on until your hands are clean and fully dry.

How to protect yourself from cleaning products

Selecting hand hygiene products

- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 60-90% alcohol.
- To reduce irritation, try to select products that contain moisturizers or emollients/skin conditioners.
- Use unscented hand soaps, cleansers and lotions.



Using cleaning products safely

- Prepare cleaning solutions properly. Always follow safety information provided by the manufacturer.
 - Prior to the use of any cleaning agents, review the label to understand its appropriate use, precautions that need to be taken while using it and what to do in case of accidental exposures.
 - Where possible, use pre-mixed solutions; otherwise, dilute concentrated solutions according to instructions on the product label. Wear gloves and eye protection when mixing or pouring chemicals.
 - Only dilute bleach by adding water (not additional chemicals).
 - Prepare bleach solutions in a well-ventilated area.
- Avoid the use of trigger sprays to apply products broadly to surfaces; turn nozzle to stream mode or spray directly into cleaning cloth.
- Disinfectants, household cleaners and bleach are for inanimate surfaces in the environment. Never use these products on the skin, nor ingest or inject.
- Wear gloves and any additional personal protective equipment (PPE) (as recommended by the manufacturer) when handling, using and disposing cleaning products.

Learn about the virus

To learn more and access up-to-date information on COVID-19 visit the Ontario Ministry of Health's website: ontario.ca/coronavirus.

For more information please contact: _____

The information in this document is current as of October 30, 2020.