Presentations for Schools and Child Care Settings: Environmental Cleaning

Transcript: Presentation 6 of 6
This presentation is a review of environmental cleaning for the school and child care settings.
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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

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
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.
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.
Cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces is a key step in infection prevention and control, and can help to prevent indirect transmission of illness from contact with contaminated surfaces.

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 and disinfected at least twice daily and more frequently, if the surface appears visibly soiled or is a surface that is more frequently touched.

Washrooms and eating areas should be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily.

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.

Where possible, toys and stationary are not to be shared. If items are shared between students, these are to be cleaned and disinfected.

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).
What are the Surfaces I Should Clean and Disinfect?

- All common areas should be cleaned and disinfected regularly (e.g. minimum daily)
- Shared equipment (e.g. toys, shared electronics) should be cleaned and disinfected between users
- Clean hands before and after using playground equipment
- Clean and disinfect items/surfaces touched by person who develops signs/symptoms of COVID-19 as soon as possible.

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)
- Shared equipment (e.g. toys, shared electronics) should be cleaned and disinfected between users
- Clean hands before and after using playground equipment
- Clean and disinfect items/surfaces touched by person who develops signs/symptoms of COVID-19 as soon as possible.
What About Other Items Not Easily Cleaned?

• Studies show that virus levels on surfaces decline over time naturally.

• Items and toys that cannot be cleaned and disinfected from classrooms/child care settings or commonly shared spaces should be removed.

• 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.

What do you 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.

• Items and toys that cannot be cleaned and disinfected from classrooms/child care settings or commonly shared spaces should be removed.

• 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.
For more information ...

Public Health Ontario resources:

- COVID-19 Preparedness and Prevention in Elementary and Secondary (K-12) Schools: Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Overview (webinar)
- 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
- COVID-19 Preparedness and Prevention in Elementary and Secondary (K-12) Schools - Checklist Orientation (webinar)

Other resources:

- Health Canada Drug Product Database Online Query
- Ontario Ministry of Education, Guide to reopening Ontario’s schools

If you would like more information, please see the list of resources here.
How Did We Do?
Your feedback is important to us. Please provide your input by clicking on the survey button. Thank you!

Survey

PHO would appreciate your thoughts on these refresher presentations. Please visit PHO’s school resources webpage to access and complete a short survey.
Public Health Ontario keeps Ontarians safe and healthy. Find out more at PublicHealthOntario.ca

For More Information About This Presentation, Contact:

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