

CDC Updates Guidelines on Surface Disinfecting

Nathan "The Bull"

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has released a statement that says that the risks of transmission of COVID-19 via surfaces are low and that at times, the cleaning of surfaces may, in fact, not be as necessary as previously thought.

CNN reported, Chief of the Waterborne Disease Prevention Branch at the CDC, Vincent Hill, talked about cleaning surfaces during a CDC-sponsored phone conference. Hill stated, "CDC determined that the risk of surface transmission is low, and secondary to the primary routes of virus transmission through direct contact droplets and aerosols." Hill went on to say that the risk of COVID-19 transmission when indoors is quite low, but when outdoors the risk drops even more, stating that the sun and other factors have virus-killing properties.

"In most situations, cleaning surfaces using soap or detergent, and not disinfecting, is enough to reduce the already low risk of virus transmission through surfaces," Hill stated. "Disinfecting surfaces is typically not necessary, unless a sick person or someone positive for Covid-19 has been in the home within the last 24 hours."

Early this month, the CDC made updates to these guidelines on surface disinfecting, stating, "The principal mode by which people are infected with SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) is through exposure to respiratory droplets carrying infectious virus. It is possible for people to be infected through contact with contaminated surfaces or objects (fomites), but the risk is generally considered to be low."

Hill stated that most people should focus on cleaning any surface that has high contact, giving examples of light switches and doorknobs. He went on to say that lots of cleaning and

disinfecting has a low overall impact on the transmission of COVID-19 and only adds to “hygiene theater.”

Hill stated, “Putting on a show” of disinfecting and cleaning “may be used to give people a sense of security that they are being protected from the virus, but this may be a false sense of security, if other prevention measures like wearing masks, physical distancing, and hand hygiene are not being consistently performed.”

He went on to add, “It also could make people feel less need to engage in these other important prevention measures.”

The CDC guidelines state that while cleaning of surfaces might be mildly helpful to lower the risk of infectious transmission within a household, “there is little scientific support for routine use of disinfectants in community settings, whether indoor or outdoor, to prevent SARS-CoV-2 transmission from fomites.”

However, as more and more businesses and people attempt to disinfect their surfaces as a way to protect themselves from Covid-19 during the pandemic, the CDC has found that these practices can also be quite dangerous.

“Public inquiries indicate that some people may purposely drink, inhale, or spray their skin with disinfectants, without understanding that use of disinfectants in this way can cause serious harm to their bodies,” Hill stated.

Per the CDC, “There have been increases in poisonings and injuries from unsafe use of cleaners and disinfectants since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some types of disinfection applications, particularly those including fogging or misting, are neither safe nor effective for inactivating the virus unless properly used.”

The CDC has stressed that while infection can take place through contact with surfaces, the vast majority of infections are spread through “exposure to respiratory droplets carrying infectious virus.”

Retrieved from <https://steadfastandloyal.com/news-for-you/cdc-updates-guidelines-on-surface-disinfecting/>