

The CDC's Revised Disinfection Guidance Is Fundamentally Flawed

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DALLAS, TEXAS, UNITED STATES, May 14, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In April 2021, Dr. Rochelle Walensky, the newly named director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), updated the agency's guidance on cleaning and disinfecting household and light-touch surfaces.

"Routine cleaning performed effectively with soap or detergent, at least once per day, can substantially reduce virus levels on surfaces," the CDC said.

"Disinfection is only recommended in indoor-setting schools and homes where there has been a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19, within the last 24 hours," Dr. Walensky further expanded.

The CDC has long stated that one of the most significant ways to spread germs is by touching surfaces and then touching your face, eyes, or nose. They have also stated that germs do not move themselves, they depend on people, the environment, and surfaces. So, why during a global pandemic is the CDC downplaying the importance of disinfecting surfaces?

The shifting guidance frankly defies logic and has left healthcare and disinfection specialists alike shaking their heads in disbelief. If our common goal is to keep people out of hospitals and to work towards a return to normalcy, we should utilize all the tools at our disposal to prevent COVID and other infectious diseases.

By dispelling five myths about the CDC's revised disinfection guidance, we can adopt safe and sustainable long-term practices.

MYTH: We only need to disinfect if there was a known COVID case within the past 24 hours. False, this is reactive advice rather than preventative guidance. As research shows, COVID can be transmitted by people who are asymptomatic, making it virtually impossible to know if a person with the virus has been in the space.

MYTH: I wash my hands regularly, that should be enough.

False, a [2015 behavioral study](#) revealed that the people observed touched their faces an average of 23 times per hour. Playing this out in a common setting: you wash your hands before sitting down at a table that was not properly disinfected, you touch the surface, and then you touch your face. This is further compounded by the fact that we place government and CDC mandated face coverings on these surfaces and then put them on our faces for prolonged periods of time.

MYTH: COVID is the only bug in the game.

False, there are thousands of pathogens that cause infectious disease. CDC stands for Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and their guidance should encompass all infectious diseases, not solely COVID. COVID, after all is the easiest type of virus to kill.

As an example, historically Healthcare Acquired Infections (HAI) have infected millions and claim the lives of over 100,000 in the U.S. alone each year. This is an astounding 6% death rate. Rather than provide guidance to help ensure that these pathogens, including MRSA and C. diff, that cause HAIs are eradicated as well, the government has allowed hospitals to STOP reporting them.

MYTH: The surface is safe, it was just sprayed and wiped down.

False, all products have a contact time, or period that it must remain wet on the surface to be effective. If a product's contact time, which is generally 10 minutes, is not adhered to, pathogens are not eliminated thoroughly, making them likely to spread. This includes COVID, which lands on surfaces after being suspended in air.

MYTH: Disinfectant on the CDC and EPA recommended List N are practical to use in the fight against COVID.

False, [List N, the EPA's](#) compilation of disinfectants viewed by facilities teams and risk assessors as the holy grail of products that should be used in the fight against COVID is mostly comprised of products with a 10-minute contact time and ingredients known to be respiratory irritants.

This contradicts the CDC's long-standing, pre-COVID guidance of using products with the shortest contact time possible. Common sense would also tell you to not use products that are known respiratory irritants, as they make people more vulnerable to respiratory illnesses and exasperate the symptoms of people suffering from respiratory diseases such as asthma, COPD, and COVID.

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