



WHY DOES CONTACT TIME MATTER FOR DISINFECTION?

To disinfect correctly, we need to understand contact time.

CONTACT TIME is the amount of time a disinfectant needs to do its job.

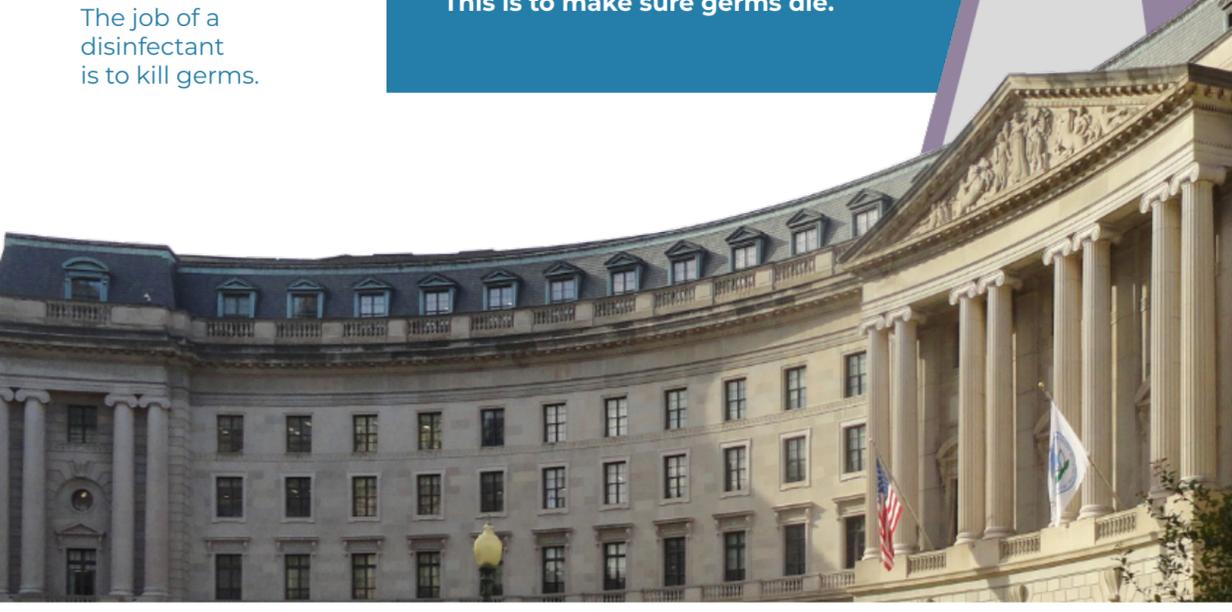


CONTACT TIME

is important to determine how long a disinfectant should be on a surface before it is wiped away or disturbed.

This is to make sure germs die.

REMEMBER
The job of a disinfectant is to kill germs.



In the United States, the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** reviews and registers disinfectants to ensure they are safe to use in workplaces.

A disinfectant's contact time is found on the label.

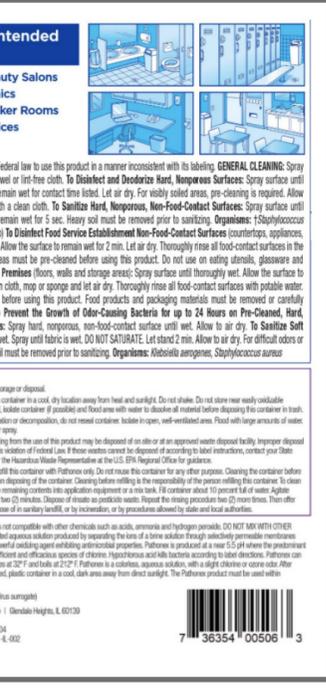
Labels that say **"HOSPITAL GRADE"** identify disinfectants you can use in healthcare settings.

When using a disinfectant it is important to follow the **label instructions**.

These instructions tell you:

- ✓ Which surfaces the disinfectant can be used on
- ✓ Which germs it can kill
- ✓ Whether it needs to be diluted

Dilute = Adding water to reduce the concentration down to a safe and correct level to kill germs.



REMEMBER A disinfectant may not kill germs right away. It takes **TIME** for germs to react with a disinfectant. Contact time can vary depending on the disinfectant you are using and the germ you are targeting. When you disinfect, **do not rush the process.**

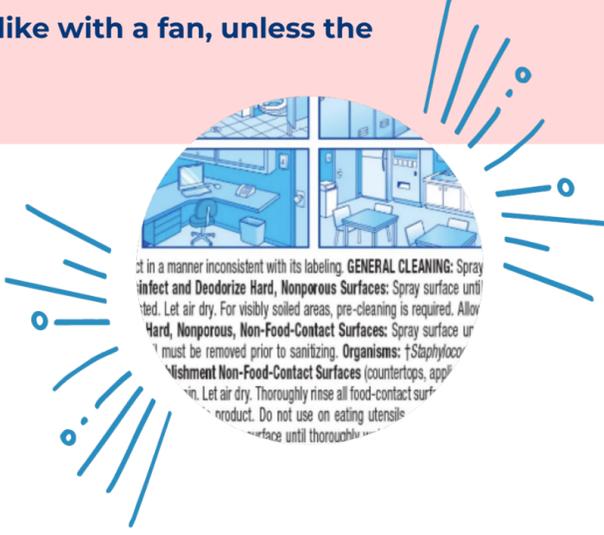


DO NOT

- ❌ **Wipe the surface before it is dry.**
- ❌ **Blow on the surface to dry it off, because your breath has germs.**
- ❌ **Blow any air on the surface, like with a fan, unless the manufacturer approves it.**

In dry environments, the disinfectant may dry before the contact time is finished.

If this happens review the instructions from the manufacturer or consider reapplying another layer of the disinfectant to reach the contact time to kill germs.



In hospitals, it is important to wait for the contact time to finish before using a surface. This can be hard. You want to get your patients in and out quickly. So you may feel pressure to move fast. However, the risk of spreading germs is greater.

When you disinfect a surface, you want to do it correctly to keep patients safe!

If you are a supervisor, your room and equipment turnover plans should account for the contact time of disinfectants your colleagues use.

If turnover time is a concern, consider selecting another disinfectant that works best for the needed timelines, rather than use it incorrectly.



When you are aware of the contact time, you can kill germs in the correct way to reduce their spread to other

PATIENTS COLLEAGUES AND PEOPLE

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