Harm from Disinfectants During COVID-19

Protect yourself and family by avoiding disinfectants containing respiratory-irritating toxic substances. Instead, choose safer effective disinfectants.

Many disinfectants used to disinfect against COVID-19 that meet EPA’s criteria contain the active ingredient Quaternary ammonium. Quaternary ammonium compounds (QAC) are registered with the EPA as pesticides and increasingly are being found to cause serious health effects. Mount Sinai Selikoff Centers for Occupational Health report on Quaternary Ammonium Compounds for health professionals cautions QAC exposure from cleaning products for triggering asthma symptoms even in people with no prior asthma history, among other serious harmful impacts.

Chlorine-based disinfectants also cause respiratory irritation and illness. For example, Nurses’ regular use of disinfectants is associated with developing COPD, 24-32% higher.

AVOID and replace disinfectants and cleaners containing these chemicals:

- Quaternary ammonium compounds Label does not specify a substance is a QAC but often ends in “ammonium chloride” Most common QAC in disinfectants are the Benzalkonium chlorides.
- Chlorine compounds / Bleach (sodium hypochlorite, hypochlorous acid, sodium chlorite & sodium chloride)
- Sodium Dichloro-S-Triazinetrione

CHOOSE SAFER disinfectant ingredients approved by CDC and EPA N List:

- Hydrogen peroxide
- Isopropyl alcohol / isopropanol
- Ethanol
- Ammonium Carbonate
- Ammonium Bicarbonate
- Peroxycetic acid (peracetic acid)
- Glutaraldehyde
- Glycolic acid
- Hydrochloric acid
- Octanoic acid
- Thymol
- L-lactic acid
- Citric Acid

WARNING: Do not mix products. Mixing bleach with vinegar, ammonia or alcohol is very toxic. Clean surface dirt and rinse before disinfecting.

Contact times vary, read label.

Practical Guidance for Home and Business

1) Use this list of safer disinfectants — Link: bit.ly/disinfect-safely
Download Safer Disinfectants Buying Guide Chart, by Surface & Formulate Type

2) Watch this short webinar "Pros & Cons of Sanitizers & Disinfectants for Covid-19"
Link: bit.ly/disinfect-video
by American Academy of Pediatrics, Dr. Mike Ichniowski and Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, Dr. Ana Rule

WATCH NOW

Choose Safer Disinfectant Products

Hydrogen peroxide
- Angel
- Vaprox Hydrogen Peroxide Sterilant
- Proxi Home General Disinfectant Cleaner Spray
- B-Cap 35 Antimicrobial Agent
- Peroxy HDX
- Binary Ionization Technology Solution
- Oxy-1 Wipes
- Accell Disinfectant Cleaner
- Peroxide Multi Surface Cleaner and Disinfectant
- Peroxide Disinfectant and Glass Cleaner RTU
- Clorox Commercial Solutions Hydrogen Peroxide Cleaner Disinfectant Wipes
- Clorox Commercial Solutions Clorox Disinfecting Biostain & Odor Remover
- Oxyteam Disinfectant Cleaner
- Oxiwix Wipes
- Sani-HyPerCide Germicidal Spray
- HaloSpray
- Photo 164 Disinfectant Cleaner
- Suretouch
- Accel 5 RTU

L-lactic Acid
- Windex Disinfectant Cleaner
- Fangio
- Gurney
- Sani-Cide EX3 RTU

Citric Acid
- Cleanicide
- SBT 2 to 1 Concentrate
- Tristel Duo for Surfaces
- Lysol Bathroom Cleaner
- Cleanicide Wipes
- Axen ® 30
- Sdc3a
- Comet Disinfecting Bathroom Cleaner

Ethanol
- Mistersaw
- Saginaw
- Purell Professional Surface Disinfectant Wipes
- Urthpro
- Lysol Neutra Air 2 in 1

Thymol
- SBT 2 to 1 Concentrate
- Benefect Botanical Daily Cleaner Disinfectant Spray
- Benefect Botanical Daily Cleaner Disinfectant Towelette
- Thymox Disinfectant Spray
- Ready to Use Thymol

More products @ bit.ly/disinfect-safely

The Smart on Pesticides Coalition works to protect Marylanders and the natural systems we depend upon from the toxic impacts of pesticides. The coalition includes more than 100 organizations and businesses. Sign up to receive updates at SmartonPesticides.org