

HOW COVID-19 SPREADS VIA SURFACES

How COVID-19 Spreads via Surfaces

The severity of symptoms is different for everyone. Some may show no obvious symptoms. For this reason, it is important to maintain workplace hygiene procedures by regularly and thoroughly cleaning and disinfecting surfaces.



Persons with COVID-19 release droplets of infected fluid when coughing, sneezing or exhaling



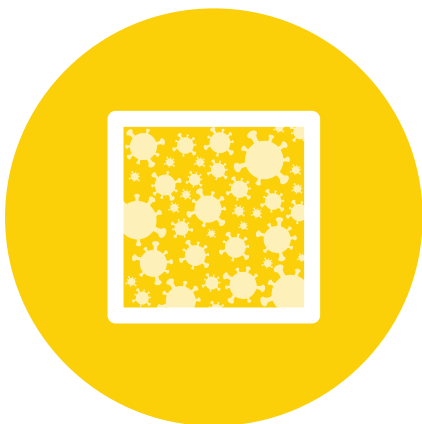
These droplets may fall onto nearby surfaces including desks, computers, keyboards and telephones



If another person comes into contact with these surfaces and then touches their eyes, nose or mouth, they may become infected with COVID-19

How Long Can the Virus Survive on Surfaces?

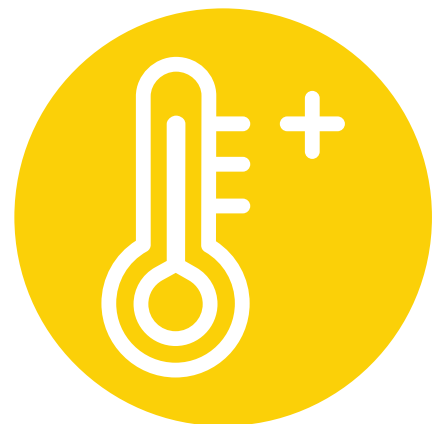
It is still unclear exactly how long the virus remains active on surfaces. Current research suggests that it can last for a few hours or up to several days dependent on;



The amount of contaminated fluid present



The surface type e.g. metal, plastic, cardboard



The temperature of the environment

Care was taken when writing this guide and this information was correct at the time of publishing, however the COVID-19 situation evolves rapidly. Refer to the Papua New Guinea Government Department of Health's website for the latest information.

HOW TO CLEAN WORK STATIONS

The Australian Government Department of Health maintains that it is unlikely for the virus to survive long after droplets have dried out. However, infection risks in the workplace are still present and therefore frequently touched surfaces need to be cleaned regularly to ensure workplace hygiene and minimise transmission.



How to Clean Work Stations

If the below infection control guidelines are followed, the risk of transmission of the virus via surfaces is minimised. Cleaning should take place several times per day. Surfaces that could have been exposed to droplets should be disinfected every 2-4 hours.

Clean Surfaces Before Disinfecting

Cleaning surfaces before disinfecting is essential. If not removed prior, organic matter can inactivate the disinfectant.

Use Disinfectant to Kill Virus

Disinfectant solution or alcohol based wipes kill any virus on the surface. This does not replace actual environmental cleaning.

Do Not Dry Surface Immediately

The disinfectant needs to remain on the surface for the time specified on the product in order to be effective and neutralise the virus.

Dispose of Cleaning Materials

After cleaning, dispose of any cleaning materials. They should not be reused.

Wash Your Hands

Use soap and water to thoroughly wash your hands. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol based hand sanitiser.

Frequently touched surfaces at your personal work station include:

Telephones	Mice
Mobile Phones	Draw Handles
Desks	Chair Arms
Computers	Chair Backs
Keyboards	



Ensuring good personal hygiene in the workplace is a simple and effective way to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 via surfaces. Cleaning and then disinfecting your personal work station including your most frequently touched surfaces ensures the health and safety of yourself and those around you. For further information regarding proper hygiene procedures in the workplace please see the Papua New Guinea Government Department of Health directive or visit The World Health Organisation.

The World Health Organisation

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