



Choosing a Disinfectant

Implementing an efficient cleaning and disinfection program is an effective means of protecting both staff and customers from infectious bacteria and viruses.

Workplaces should be cleaned/disinfected at least daily, and surfaces touched frequently by customers and staff cleaned more regularly.

What is the difference between cleaning and disinfecting?

Cleaning with detergent manually reduces the number of germs on surfaces. Detergents will help lift dirt and germs for easier removal but have no killing capacity.

Disinfecting kills germs on a surface rather than cleaning them away. Dirt, grease, and grime reduce the ability of disinfectants to kill, so surfaces must be cleaned with a detergent first. A combined detergent and disinfectant product will help lift and remove dirt and germs as well as killing any germs that are left on the surface. This is known as a 2 in 1 system.

What is the importance of a Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) Registration Certificate?

A hospital-grade disinfectant is a disinfectant that is suitable for use on hard surfaces within the healthcare environment.

Hospital-grade disinfectants with specific claims must comply with TGA Order 104 and must be 'listed' on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG) before they can be supplied in Australia.

There are several different classifications for cleaning and disinfectant wipes within Australia. An ARTG certificate should be reviewed for each product range and ensure that it meets the minimum level of requirements.

The TGA has published a list of disinfectant products that are permitted to claim they are effective against COVID-19. Disinfectants listed here, when used following the manufacturer's directions, will be effective against COVID-19.

What does Contact Time mean?

Contact time is the time that a disinfectant solution must remain in contact with surfaces to kill germs. Different disinfectants have different formulas with varied effectiveness, so the contact time may vary accordingly.

Contact times should be noted on the packaging of your disinfectant. If the instructions for use state a contact time of 5 minutes, the product must stay damp and in contact with the surface for a full 5 minutes to ensure that the germs are killed. Removal or drying off before this time risks ineffective disinfection. If no time is specified, SafeWork Australia state the disinfectant should be left for ten minutes before removing (<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces/industry-information/general-industry-information/cleaning>).

Contact times should also be achievable. Some products may need to stay damp on the surface for 10 minutes. This may be difficult to achieve due to time limitations or evaporation of the formula before the 10 minutes is completed.

Disinfectant efficacy and claims

Different disinfectants will make differing claims on their labels. Efficacy claims, such as 99% or 99.99% effective against a particular germ, is one of these. You may consider 99% effective as quite impressive and more than adequate; HOWEVER, when you consider that a surface or piece of equipment will have millions of germs on it, the higher efficacy becomes very important.

For example – if an EFTPOS machine or reception counter has 1,000,000 bacteria on the surface, and your disinfectant kills only 99%, then you will still have 10,000 bacteria remaining on the surface. This is enough to cause infection. Using a disinfectant that is 99.99% effective will leave only 100 bacteria and decrease the risk of infectious transmission. Choosing products with scientific claims of higher efficacy is important to ensure safe and effective disinfection.



How do you know if a disinfectant is effective against a particular germ, bacteria, or virus?

The ARTG certificate will state the Intended Purpose of the product and which organisms the disinfectant has been tested as effective against.

All hospital-grade disinfectants with specific claims must comply with ARTG standards before they can be supplied in Australia.

A product that does not have any specific claims that has been approved by the TGA can only claim efficacy against bacteria or germs. It cannot name a specific organism like MRSA or COVID-19. To make claims against a specific germ, the test must be done in an accredited lab and the results provided to the TGA for assessment.

Disinfectant applied in correct concentration

Disinfectants supplied in the correct concentration, not requiring mixing, offers consistent delivery of biocides. This is imperative to reduce the number of organisms on a surface and ensure safe disinfection.

Products requiring mixing, be it liquids, powders or tablets can lead to dilution errors, both accidentally and intentionally.

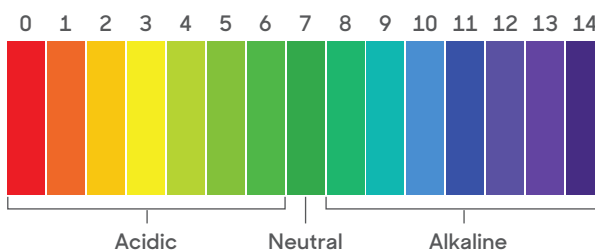
An error in using too much water when mixing up a solution can result in a disinfectant that is too weak and therefore ineffective. Conversely, using too little water results in a too strong solution, resulting in potentially toxic and harmful to materials and the user.

Some well intentioned staff may feel they are doing the right thing by adding extra water – making the formula go further and saving money. Others might think making a stronger solution will mean it kills twice as much.

Material Compatibility and pH

A pH that is too high (alkaline) or too low (acidic) can be harmful to both surfaces, as well as the user. Look for a disinfectant with a near neutral pH to protect surfaces and staff.

Also, look for a disinfectant that has been tested as compatible for use on various surfaces, including plastics, stainless steel and glass. Does the manufacturer have claims to be safe to use on specific equipment?



What are the limitations for Alcohol wipes and disinfectant solutions?

Alcohol disinfectants do not work well on dirty surfaces. Any dirt, grease, or grime left on the surface prevents effective disinfection. You must clean before you disinfect with alcohol using the 2-step process.

Alcohol doesn't have any detergent or cleaning properties. After pre-cleaning, surfaces must be dried before alcohol is applied, as any remaining liquid can cause the alcohol to dilute.

Because alcohol evaporates on a surface quickly, it is not a suitable choice for disinfecting large surfaces. Correct contact times are difficult to achieve, allowing microorganisms to survive.

Alcohol can affect equipment and surfaces, especially some plastics. After prolonged use of alcohol, plastics can become brittle and crack. Rubbers may also be affected and may become discoloured and hardened, or brittle.

Training and support

A product can only be as effective as the people who are using it.

Comprehensive training and instructions for the correct use and best practice for products should be available.



10 reasons to choose Clinell Universal Wipes

- 1. Kills at least 99.99% of germs.**
 Patented formula with wide spectrum antimicrobial activity including MRSA, VRE, Norovirus and Coronavirus.
- 2. Multi-purpose**
 Universal not only kills germs, it also cleans. Many disinfectants such as alcohol and chlorine do not work in dirty conditions. Added surfactants in the Universal formula allow cleaning and disinfection in one wipe.
- 3. Cost effective**
 Because of its unique multi-purpose formula it is more cost effective than multiple cleaning products – saving time and money.
- 4. Compliance**
 Low level instrument grade disinfectant ensuring you comply to AS/NZ 4187, and TGA listed as a Class IIB medical device to meet applicable standards.
- 5. High material compatibility**
 Near neutral pH. Suitable for use on a wide range of surfaces, including table tops, taps, door handles, mattresses, desks, computer keyboards, chairs, etc.
- 6. Rapid action**
 Realistic kill times – proven to be effective against Coronavirus in 30 seconds and MRSA, VRE and Norovirus in 60 seconds.
- 7. Trusted**
 Number one cleaning and disinfectant wipe used in Australian hospitals. Over 447 million wipes were sold in 2020 in Australia alone.
- 8. Increases compliance**
 Unique wall mounted dispensers are hygienic and accessible, for quick and easy wipe dispensing. Proven to increase compliance and provide effective wipe usage by conveniently placing wipes at their point of use.
- 9. Aftersales support you can trust**
 Extensive educational information and support is available to ensure Universal Wipes are used correctly and appropriately.
- 10. Alcohol free**
 A mix of biocides, with different mechanisms of action, designed to mitigate against bacterial resistance.

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