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சுகாதார, போசணமற்றும் சுதேசவைத்திய அமைச்சு
Ministry of Health, Nutrition & Indigenous Medicine

All DDGs
All Directors
PDHS and RDHSs


Health Ministry's stand on wearing masks, gloves and disinfection

Annexed herewith are the guidelines on wearing masks, gloves and disinfection.

Annex 1 - Disinfection of inside and outside of public buildings and open public places

Annex 2- Use of gloves in the community/ in public places

Annex 3- Wearing masks in the community


Director General of Health Services

Ministry of Health and Indigenous Medical Services

Annex 1

Disinfection of inside and outside of public buildings and open public places

SARS-CoV2, the causative agent of COVID-19, has been to survive from hours to days on a contaminated surface, particularly, frequently touched surfaces. Therefore, considering the possibility of hand to face transfer of the virus, which can result in the spread of the disease, decontamination of such surfaces are required to break the chain of transmission. Considering the available evidence and global consensus, the Sri Lanka College of Microbiologists wishes to emphasize the need to disinfect frequently touched surfaces in public areas while **strongly discouraging widespread spraying of public places**. Large scale spraying/ fogging of disinfectants to the environment may have a serious health impact on humans. This practice may result in highly negative effects on the environment, fauna and flora as well.

General recommendations regarding cleaning and disinfection of public places:

- Outdoor areas other than outdoor hard surfaces eg. Benches touch by multiple people require only general routine cleaning. Do not use/spray disinfectant.
1. The authorities of these public places should develop a protocol for cleaning and disinfection
 2. Make sure the availability of appropriate PPE and disinfectant
 3. All staff (management and cleaning staff etc.) should be aware of the cleaning protocol
 4. Training and education of cleaning staff should be done regarding cleaning and disinfection procedures and correct use of disinfectants
 5. Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and training on the appropriate use of PPE should be available for cleaning staff
 6. Use only recommended disinfectant for environmental cleaning. If some one is planning to use a new agent ,they should obtain the guidance of MoH .
 7. Routine cleaning and housekeeping should be maintained including measures to prevent the spread of mosquito-borne diseases
 8. Outdoor areas generally need routine cleaning, especially to clear mosquito breeding but do not need disinfectants

9. **Use of Ozone and UVC is not recommended as environmental disinfectants** because it can be hazardous to humans if exposed. Air purifiers too should not be used to decontaminate indoor air. Some air purifiers emit hazardous agents to humans including UVC light, ozone, charged ions and oxidants by products.
10. Always clean visibly dirty surfaces with soap and water
11. Cleaning should be done from the least soiled (cleanest) to the most soiled (dirtiest) areas, and from the higher to lower levels so that debris may fall on the floor and is cleaned last
12. If workplace, schools closed/Unoccupied for more than 7days only routine cleaning is adequate
13. Minimize the use of rugs and carpets to facilitate proper frequent cleaning
14. All rooms and common areas should be ventilated daily. Keep the door open to avoid frequent touching of knobs.
15. Use dedicated cleaning equipment for areas used by the public and for the area only use by employees
16. In indoor spaces, routine application of disinfectants to environmental surfaces by spraying or fogging (also known as fumigation or misting) is not recommended. If disinfectants are to be applied, this should be done with a cloth or wipe that has been soaked in disinfectant.
17. Spraying or fumigation of outdoor spaces, such as streets or marketplaces, is also not recommended to kill the COVID-19 virus or other pathogens because disinfectant is inactivated by dirt and debris.
18. Follow appropriate concentration and contact time for the disinfectant used. Highly/ frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected using an appropriate disinfectant.
 - 70% alcohol – for metal surfaces
 - 0.1% (1000ppm) hypochlorite – for non-metal surfaces
 - Follow manufacturer's instructions for preparation and application of disinfectants including the contact time
19. Soiled surfaces/ items can be washed with a soap solution and then wiped with a disinfectant

20. The cleaning and disinfection process should be monitored and evaluated frequently
21. Attention should be paid to clean the drains and to avoid rainwater collecting in gutters
22. Adding larvicides to selected places can be considered
23. The cleaning material should be properly cleaned at the end of every cleaning and dried.
24. Waste material produced during the cleaning should be placed in the garbage.
25. Wash hands each time after removing PPE such as gloves.

Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned as often as possible (at least daily and if possible, more frequently)

The use of a neutral detergent for the cleaning of surfaces in general premises (i.e. not for premises where a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 has been) should be sufficient

When a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 has been in a specific location (e.g. public waiting area, office space, hotel room, school, identified place in a workplace or school), this should be first well ventilated with fresh air for a minimum of 1 hour, and thereafter carefully cleaned with a neutral detergent, followed by decontamination of surfaces using 0.1% sodium hypochlorite for non-metal surfaces and 70% alcohol for metal surfaces

Examples for frequently touched surfaces

- Doorknobs and handles
- Stair rails
- Countertops
- Telephones
- Handrails
- Light switches
- Handles on equipment

- Elevator buttons
- Shared furniture
- Shared remote controls
- Shared desktops
- Seats and handrails and poles of transit vehicles
- Street benches
- Taps
- Toilet handles
- Work surfaces