

Tips for Stopping the Spread of Covid-19 at Home.

We all know that hand washing is an important defense against coronavirus. And as we work to keep ourselves and those we live with healthy, routine cleaning and disinfecting of areas in our apartment is more important than ever. Here are a few guidelines from the experts on how to best tend to your home and personal belongings.

What is the best way to clean and disinfect the kitchen?

The following are good practices to implement, particularly if you share an apartment:

- Clean your dishes separately, with your own dish-soap, and dry them with our own dishtowel. Alternatively, you can use the dishwasher at 60°.
- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning and sanitizing. Gloves should be discarded after each cleaning. If reusable gloves are used, those gloves should be dedicated for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces for COVID-19 and not used for any other purpose. Wash hands immediately after gloves are removed.
- Wash surfaces with soap and water. Always do this prior to disinfection.
- After cleaning, disinfect surfaces as an extra precaution to kill germs that might remain. Disinfecting cleaned surface is a best practice to help to stop illness transmission. Use a strong bleach solution, a 70% alcohol solution. Allow to air dry.
- If this strong bleach solution is used in the kitchen, be sure to rinse countertops, utensils, pots and pans, utensils and any other food contact surface with clean water after disinfecting (it is not necessary to rinse bathroom surfaces).

What about surfaces like doorknobs and handles where it might not work to clean and then disinfect?

For frequently touched surfaces (tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, faucets.....) use standard household cleaners. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

What are the recommendations for cleaning my room, personal spaces and belongings?

Here are a few tips we recommend that you integrate into your routine:

- Ventilate the room you are staying in for ten minutes several times a day by opening windows.

- **Laundry:**

Wash your laundry (linens, towels) at 60° for 30 minutes or more. Clean bed sheets, towels and clothes regularly. Don't shake dirty laundry to minimize the possibility of dispersing the virus through the air. Launder items with soap or detergent, using the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely — both steps help to kill the virus. Wash your hands with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand rub, immediately afterwards. Wash or disinfect your laundry bag and hamper as well. Consider storing laundry in disposable bags.

- Use kitchen tools like a sponge or a mop to avoid spreading dust. Don't use the vacuum cleaner.
- Get rid of any garbage that could be contaminated (or follow garbage disposal instructions if you have relocated)
- Use a plastic garbage bag (opaque, 30 liters max, closed garbage bag with ties)
 - Keep this bag in your room
 - Reserve this bag for the disposal of masks, paper tissues, wipes, and all other disinfecting waste
 - When the bag is full, put it in a second bag
 - Don't touch the bag for 24 hours
 - Throw this bag in the building's non-recyclable trash container

Should I be worried about the groceries or food that I consume being potentially contaminated?

No. As grocery shopping remains a necessity during this pandemic, many people have questions about how to shop safely. Be reassured that there is currently no evidence of human or animal food or food packaging being associated with transmission of the coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

This particular coronavirus causes respiratory illness and is spread from person-to-person, unlike foodborne gastrointestinal or GI viruses, such as norovirus and hepatitis A that often make people ill through contaminated food.

What should I keep in mind when I go grocery shopping?

1. Prepare a shopping list in advance. Buy just 1 to 2 weeks-worth of groceries at a time. Buying more than you need can create unnecessary demand and temporary shortages.
2. Wear a mask at all times (mask is mandatory at all times in Paris and Ile de France)
3. Carry your own wipes, or use one provided by the store to wipe down the handles of the shopping cart or basket. If you use reusable shopping bags, ensure they are cleaned or washed before each use.
4. Practice social distancing while shopping – keeping at least one meter between you, other shoppers, and store employees. Keep your hands away from your face.
5. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds when you return home and again after you put away your groceries.

Should I wipe down packaging after I go shopping?

There is no evidence that food packages should be wiped down when you bring them home from the grocery store. But if you do want to add this extra step, make sure you do it safely. Foods that should be kept cold, for example refrigerated items like milk or eggs, or frozen entrees, should go straight into the refrigerator or freezer when you reach home for safety-sake. If you wish, you can use an antibacterial wipe on dry surfaces such as boxes or cans.

What about food preparation at home? Is there anything I should keep in mind?

Yes, there are few things you can do to help stop the spread of germs.

- Before eating, rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water, including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten. Scrub firm produce with a clean produce brush. For canned goods, remember to clean lids before opening.
- When unpacking groceries, refrigerate or freeze meat, poultry, eggs, seafood, and other perishables—like berries, lettuce, herbs, and mushrooms—within 2 hours of purchasing.

- Regularly clean and sanitize kitchen counters using a commercially available disinfectant product or a DIY sanitizing solution with 1 tablespoon unscented liquid chlorine bleach to 1 gallon of water or 1 teaspoon of bleach per quart of water. Be sure not to use this solution or other disinfecting products directly on food surfaces!