

# CLEANING

## Guidance for Shelters

### Cleaning Environmental Surfaces

Routine cleaning and disinfecting will kill flu viruses. Flu viruses can survive on non-porous surfaces and remain infectious for up to eight hours. Frequently touched surfaces or items should be disinfected routinely to reduce the risk of spreading flu viruses. Surfaces and items in the following areas should be prioritized and cleaned based on the following frequency recommendations:

After use/as needed	Daily or as needed	Weekly
Food preparation areas	Restrooms	Living and sleeping areas
Cots and bedding	Medical and first aid areas Isolation areas	Furniture used by residents

When using a vacuum cleaner to clean floors and upholstery, use a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter. Use commercially available products to remove soil or stains from carpets and upholstery.

### Cots and Bedding

Flu viruses can be destroyed by heat (temperatures above 167°F) and by several chemical germicides—chlorine, hydrogen peroxide, soap detergents, iodine based antiseptics and alcohol—if used at the proper concentration for a sufficient length of time. Routine laundering of bedspreads, towels and other linens is sufficient to kill H1N1 and flu viruses. The following recommendations should be taken when laundering:

- Wear disposable gloves when handling linens
- Be careful not to agitate linens or laundry or hug them to the body when transporting
- Launder linens with standard bleach, soap and hot water and tumble dry on a hot setting
- Wash hands with soap and water before and after gloving and after handling dirty linens

Cots should be covered with an impermeable barrier (waterproof mat, absorbent pad, plastic, etc.) Plastic barriers used on cots should be removed and disinfected between clients.

- Wear disposable gloves
- Use a paper towel wetted with an EPA-registered disinfectant and wipe down the entire surface
- Dispose of paper towels and gloves
- Allow the surface to air dry

### Cleaning Toys

Shared toys have the potential to spread disease. Schedule routine cleaning for toys at least daily, after each use and when they are visibly soiled. Pay special attention to toys that are used by young children and may be placed in a child's mouth. Toys should be non-porous and not used in the water. Avoid stuffed animals, hand-held electronic games and wooden or blow toys, which are difficult to clean.

Place used toys in a box labeled 'dirty toys' in a segregated area until they can be disinfected. Wipe small toys with a 70% alcohol swab and allow to air dry. For all other toys, hand wash with soap and water using dishwashing

continued on next page →

soap. Scrub the toy in warm, soapy water using a toothbrush or dishcloth to reach into the crevices. Inspect toys frequently and remove toys that are broken, unusable or unable to be cleaned. Discard books as they become worn. Rotate magazines and reading materials monthly.

### **Food Safety**

Food provided at the shelter should be handled appropriately in order to prevent food borne illness from spreading among residents. Work closely with dietitians and sanitarians to plan and control food safety. Dishes and utensils used by a sick person do not need to be washed separately. Wash thoroughly in a dishwasher or by hand with soap and hot water before being re-used. Staff that handles these items before they are washed should immediately wash their hands with soap and water.

### **Cleaning Body Fluid Spills**

All body fluid spills have the potential to infect staff and residents and should be cleaned up immediately. If body fluids spill, the following precautions and procedures should be followed:

- Put on gloves
- Cover the spill with absorbent material
- Apply an EPA-registered disinfectant (allow to sit for the time required by the manufacturer)
- Cover the spill with additional absorbent material
- Dispose of all materials in appropriate waste container
- Clean the area with a cloth or paper towels using an EPA-registered disinfectant
- Allow surface to air dry

### **Selecting Disinfectants**

All disinfecting should be done with an EPA-registered chemical disinfectant, following the manufacturer's recommendations. If an EPA-registered product is not available, a bleach-water solution can be created by mixing one teaspoon of unscented household bleach per quart of clean water.

### **Waste Management**

Trash receptacles should be readily available and emptied regularly. Medical waste should be disposed of in separate biohazard containers. Areas used to collect trash should be safe, clean and free of access by vermin or insects. When trash is emptied from holding area, the area should be cleaned and disinfected.