

Criteria for Selecting a Disinfectant

If reviewing current or new environmental cleaning and disinfection products, follow this checklist to make sure the product you choose meets all the required criteria:

Disinfectants must have either a Drug Identification Number (DIN) or Natural Product Number (NPN):

- Locate this number on the product label/container
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) numbers are not acceptable
- Bleach is an exception as it is acceptable but does not have a DIN or NPN
- Products marked only as a cleaning product cannot be substituted for a disinfectant

Review the Health Canada Drug Product Database to determine if the disinfectant is registered and approved for use in Canada.

- This site will also tell you key information like active ingredients and how it can be used (e.g., on surfaces or non-critical medical equipment)
- <https://health-products.canada.ca/dpd-bdpp/index-eng.jsp>

Search Health Canada's list of disinfectants with evidence for use against COVID-19.

- <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>
- While most disinfectants are effective against COVID-19, those on this list are supported by evidence
- If your disinfectant is not on this list, it may still be acceptable for use. Low level disinfectants are acceptable for use and effective against COVID-19.
 - For a product to be considered a low level disinfectant it must be effective against *Salmonella*, *Staphylococcus* and *Pseudomonas*. Review the label or product information to confirm.

Determine if the product you are considering has effectiveness against other pathogens.

- It is recommended that a product with effectiveness against norovirus be used
- Consider also sourcing a separate sporicidal product in the event of *Clostridium difficile* in your facility.

Review the contact time (time the product must stay wet on a surface to be effective).

- The contact time must be 5 minutes or less to be practical in your setting

Review and understand how to use the product to make sure it is a good fit for your facility.

- PPE required when using the product (e.g., gloves)
- One step cleaner and disinfectant vs. two step (i.e., separate cleaning step). A two step product can be used but will require additional staff time to apply the products correctly.
- If the disinfectant is mixed from concentrate, also consider the requirement for monitoring such as test strips and how to mix consistently (e.g., measuring cup/automated dispenser). Your chemical supplier can source test strips.

Look at how the product is applied on surfaces. Spray bottles are not acceptable.

- Applications of disinfectants by aerosol or trigger sprays may cause eye injuries or induce or compound respiratory problems or illness
- Review whether the bottle applicator can be switched to a squirt top or adjusted to a pour format instead of a spray

Review and request documentation from your supplier for the disinfectant product you use onsite that details:

- When pre-cleaning is required (i.e., steps to follow before the product is used)
- Product shelf life: how long the product can be used once mixed before a new solution must be made.
- Expiry dates: this may be found on the bottle but may need to be requested
- Safety data sheet (SDS)

This document is not intended to recommend or endorse the use of any specific product. Please consult Health Canada's Drug Product Database online query regarding products licensed for use in Canada.

NOTE: This fact sheet is meant to review surface cleaning and disinfection products and does not include high level disinfectants.