



CLEANING AND DISINFECTING REUSABLE BAGS

Current evidence suggests that novel coronavirus may remain viable for hours or days on a variety of surfaces. Cleaning followed by disinfection is recommended by the CDC as a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in households and community settings.

CLEANING

Refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. It does not kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

DISINFECTING

Refers to using chemicals, for example, EPA-registered disinfectants, to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

Plastic and Nylon Bags

- Clean inside and outside of the bag with soapy water and rinse. Spray or wipe down the bags inside and out with diluted bleach solution (see below) or recommended disinfectant.
- Allow bags to air dry completely before storing and using.
- CDC recommends diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solution
- EPA- recommended list, found here: <https://bit.ly/2Jue6GW>

At this time, there is no link between reusable bags and COVID-19. Reusable bags are not considered a significant risk factor in the spread of COVID-19 and as such do not need to be banned from stores.

Diluting Bleach

- Follow manufacturer's label instructions for application and proper ventilation.
 - Prepare a bleach solution by mixing: 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water OR 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
- Use containers of bleach that have been open no longer than 30 days, as bleach can break down over time.

Cloth Bags

- Wash in warm water with normal laundry detergent.
- Dry on the warmest setting possible.
- See CDC guidelines on laundry: <https://bit.ly/2ylu8k9>

It is always a good practice to clean and disinfect shopping bags after each use, and to pay extra attention to bags used to carry raw animal products.