

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: How long does COVID-19 last on surfaces?

Answer: This will depend on the type of surface. For example, it can be a few hours on paper, or a few days on wood, steel or plastic. Regardless of the time, this reinforces the importance of hand hygiene, and the cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces and equipment between patients/clients. [View a list of disinfectants from Health Canada.](#)

Question: What is the best way to “air” out a room? Does an air purifier work? What about air conditioning? Is opening the windows effective?

Answer: Remember that COVID-19 is transmitted from one person to another via contact in droplets. It's not transmitted through the airborne route. However, there are some procedures that are considered to be aerosol generating, such as intubation. For these types of procedures, there are special considerations for the design of the room. For example, intubation is done in an airborne isolation room. Generally speaking, the types of procedures performed by kinesiologists, massage therapists, physiotherapists and occupational therapists [whose colleges organized this webinar] are not considered to be aerosol generating, so there is no need to “air” out a room.

Question: Are carpeted surfaces safe? How should I clean them? Should I replace them?

Answer: Carpeting is not considered a good flooring choice in any healthcare facility because of the difficulty in cleaning it and its ability to harbour dust and spores. If you have carpet in your facility, there are two recommendations:

1. It must be cleaned regularly by a trained environmental surfaces worker using specialized carpet cleaning equipment and procedures, specific to the material.
2. Make a plan to replace the carpet. Older carpets should be prioritized for removal first.

Question: Do I need a vinyl layer on top of massage tables?

Answer: A vinyl layer is not required. The most important thing is to always clean the table with low-level disinfectant between each patient/client. It must be a healthcare quality disinfectant with a drug identification number (DIN). [View a list of disinfectants from Health Canada.](#)

Question: Do I need to replace my surgical mask after each patient/client?

Answer: You don't need to replace your mask after each interaction. This really depends on whether the patient/client has screened positive or negative for COVID-19. If the patients/clients screen negative, you can keep your mask on throughout the day as long as you don't touch or manipulate the facial protection. If you are working with a patient/client who screens positive, you should change your mask before seeing any other patients/clients. [View the recommended steps for putting on/taking off personal protective equipment \(PPE\).](#)

Question: I see patients/clients in their homes. What should I do when providing home care?

Answer: Home care can be challenging because it is an environment you can't control. You should follow all IPAC principles and the additional COVID-19 precautions. Screen patients/clients and anyone else in the home. If you identify a risk, use PPE. Any equipment used in the home should be cleaned and disinfected after use. Make sure to practise hand hygiene before and after entering the home, and before and after using PPE. [View the Ministry of Health's guidance on home care.](#)

Webinar- COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control for Regulated Health Professionals

Question: I work in a small room and I'm in close contact with patients/clients. What is the risk associated with this? How can I keep safe?

Answer: This is completely understandable given how COVID-19 is transmitted. If you need to be in close contact with a patient/client, follow all Ministry of Health guidance and IPAC practices. If the patient/client is symptomatic, consider deferring the appointment unless it is urgent or medically necessary. If they screen negative, wear a surgical/procedure mask at all times and within two metres, and consider eye protection. Perform hand hygiene before and after each patient/client, and don't touch your mask or face.

Question: As a health professional, how do I keep my family safe during this time?

Answer: The main way to keep safe is to follow IPAC practices, such as proper hand hygiene. Review and practise how to safely put on and take off PPE. Self-monitor for any symptoms of COVID-19 and if you are concerned about an exposure, contact your local public health unit, which can help you get testing.