

## COVID-19: STOP THE SPREAD OF HOUSEHOLD GERMS

COVID-19 is affecting thousands of people around the world and causing serious illness and even death. Now is the time to evaluate our daily routines to ensure we are making the right choices to stop the spread of germs within our own homes and communities.

### ORAL HEALTH SAFETY TIPS

#### **NEVER SHARE TOOTHBRUSHES OR TOOTHPASTE.**

To avoid spreading germs, give every person in your household their own toothbrush and toothpaste to use.

#### **RINSE YOUR TOOTHBRUSH AFTER USE.**

After brushing, rinse your toothbrush with tap water until it is completely clean, let the toothbrush air-dry, and store it in an upright position. If more than one brush is stored in the same container, do not let them touch each other. You do not need to soak toothbrushes in disinfecting solutions or mouthwash. **Bleach or other household disinfectants should NEVER be used to disinfect toothbrushes.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises against using your dishwasher, microwave, or ultraviolet devices to disinfect toothbrushes.



#### **WHERE TO STORE YOUR TOOTHBRUSH.**

Find a place on your bathroom counter as far from the toilet and sink as possible. If you have limited space, consider a wall-mounted toothbrush holder placed far enough above the sink to prevent splashing, and at least four feet from the toilet bowl. Always close the lid to the toilet bowl before flushing. Bacteria filled water droplets from flushing the toilet and washing hands can be transferred to toothbrushes that are too close.



Studies from the CDC have found that coronavirus may also be spread through fecal matter (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html>).



#### **REPLACE YOUR TOOTHBRUSH OFTEN.**

In general, toothbrushes should be replaced every 3-4 months, or when bristles start to fray. However, if you are immunocompromised or taking an immunosuppressant, it is recommended that you change your toothbrush more frequently. Consult with your healthcare provider for more detail(s).

# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



DELAWARE HEALTH  
AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
Division of Public Health

## CLEAN AND DISINFECT YOUR BATHROOM OFTEN.

What's the difference? Cleaning removes germs and debris from surfaces or objects by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces.



Disinfectant uses chemicals to kill germs on surfaces or objects. Cleaning and disinfecting together greatly reduces the risk of spreading infection. Brushing, flossing, and rinsing create droplets in the air called aerosols, and even the cleanest person spreads droplets everywhere in the process. These droplets contain the germs that spread common diseases, including COVID-19.

## USE A SEPARATE BATHROOM WHEN SICK.

If possible, have a person who is sick use a bathroom that is not shared with the other people in the household.

## WASH HANDS OFTEN.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after brushing your teeth, blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, going to the bathroom, and before eating or preparing food. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water is the best option if hands are visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.



General recommendations for routine cleaning and disinfecting from the CDC:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/cleaning-disinfection.html#routine-cleaning>.



**DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**  
Division of Public Health  
Bureau of Oral Health and Dental Services