

Recommended Disinfectants for Influenza-like-Illness (ILI) and Gastrointestinal (GI) Outbreaks

It should be emphasized that thoroughness of cleaning is more important in outbreak control than the choice of disinfectant used. For example, effectiveness of norovirus inactivation varies by disinfectant category in the scientific literature. Many disinfectants in wide use in AHS facilities have active ingredients known as quaternary ammonium compounds, or “quats.” Quats may not be effective for complete disinfection of surfaces contaminated with norovirus at the concentrations recommended for general disinfection by the manufacturer. SL/HL facilities should consider making disinfectants available that are known to be effective in inactivating norovirus (see below) during outbreak situations.

The following disinfectant categories/concentrations are recommended for disinfecting surfaces and equipment during *ILI*/GI illness outbreaks (follow manufacturer’s directions for use):

1. Hypochlorite at a concentration of 1000 parts-per-million. Commercially available hypochlorite-containing solutions are recommended.

Note: Freshly (i.e. daily) prepared, properly diluted household bleach solutions (e.g. 20 ml of 5.25% sodium hypochlorite in 1 litre of water) can also achieve this concentration; however, these may not be effective for all GI outbreaks, or appropriate in all situations (e.g. may damage some surfaces or equipment). Diluted household bleach is a disinfectant only, not a cleaner, so surfaces must be cleaned first with a detergent before disinfection can take place. There are no manufacturer’s directions for use available, and so the needed contact time is not known.

2. A surface disinfectant with a Drug Identification Number (DIN) issued by Health Canada with a specific label claim against norovirus, feline calicivirus or murine norovirus.

An example of a product with this label claim currently in wide use in AHS facilities is 0.5% accelerated hydrogen peroxide. There are other products available with this label claim.

NOTES:

1. Equipment should be cleaned and disinfected only with a product listed in and following the procedures outlined in the manufacturer’s directions for that equipment.
2. Surfaces must first be cleaned prior to disinfection (2 step process). If the surface disinfectant product used has cleaning properties (detergent/disinfectant) it may be used for both steps. Follow manufacturer’s directions for use.

Source “Guidelines for Outbreak Prevention, Control and Management in Supportive Living and Home Living Site”, Alberta Health Services
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/hi-dis-flu-care-and-treat-guidelines.pdf>