



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Northeast Ohio Public Health Partnership

CLEANING UP VOMIT AND FECES



General Principals

- Gently cover area with towels to minimize risk of further aerosol formation
- Wear disposable gloves, mask, and gown
- Clean soiled areas with detergent and hot water
- Always clean with paper towels or disposable cloths and dispose in infectious waste bags
- Disinfect soiled areas with freshly-made 1000 ppm (0.1%) hypochlorite (bleach) solution — 2 parts 5.25% bleach to 100 parts water (1/3 cup bleach/1 gallon water, freshly made within 24 hrs). Bleach solution should be left in place for 10 minutes to ensure adequate disinfection
- In areas that are confined or slightly confined, ensure adequate ventilation to reduce exposure to hypochlorite fumes.
- Dispose of gloves, mask and cloths in infectious waste bags
- Wash hands thoroughly using soap and water and dry them just as thoroughly

Cleaning of specific items

Bed linens, bed curtains, & pillows:

- launder in soluble alginate laundry bags
- use 0.1% hypochlorite solution to disinfect pillows with impermeable covers

Carpets:

- steam clean (ideally) or clean with detergent and hot water
- disinfect with 0.1% hypochlorite
- it is likely that standard vacuum cleaning is unhelpful and may cause greater distribution of contaminated dust particles

Hard surfaces:

- clean with detergent and hot water
- disinfect with 0.1% hypochlorite
- launder non-disposable mop heads in a hot wash

Horizontal surfaces, furniture and soft furnishings (in the vicinity of the soiled area):

- clean with detergent and hot water
- disinfect with 0.1% hypochlorite

Fixtures and fittings in toilet areas:

- clean with detergent and hot water
- disinfect with 0.1% hypochlorite

Food preparation area (including vertical surfaces):

- disinfect with 0.1% hypochlorite
- destroy any exposed food, food that may have been contaminated and food that was handled by an infected person

Work restrictions

- Any food handlers or patient caregivers with vomiting or diarrhea should be restricted from these duties until symptoms have stopped.
- An employee illness log should be kept.

These guidelines were adapted from Oregon State Public Health, Office of Disease Prevention & Epidemiology and Chadwick PR, Beards G, Brown D, et al. Management of hospital outbreaks of gastroenteritis due to small round structured viruses. J Hosp Infect 2000;45:1-10.