
COVID-19: Best Practices for Telehealth Sanitization and Inventory Management



In the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak, HRS is keeping abreast of CDC guidelines and updates to best inform sanitization of telehealth equipment. We have compiled important information below pertaining to the telehealth community, specifically in regards to sanitization and inventory management.

How to Prevent Transmission

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed. CDC recommends everyday actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Avoid sharing food.
- Follow CDC’s recommendations for using a facemask.

CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.

Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.¹



WASH HANDS FOR 20 SECONDS



AVOID CONTACT WITH SICK PEOPLE



COVER MOUTH WITH TISSUE



DON'T SHARE FOOD

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html>

Recommendations for Managing Telehealth Inventory

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has been contaminated with respiratory droplets from an infected individual, however this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.²

The CDC recommends the following guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces:

- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. Gloves should be discarded after each cleaning. If reusable gloves are used, those gloves should be dedicated for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces for COVID-19 and should not be used for other purposes.
- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- For disinfection, diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
- Do not pour solution directly onto the equipment, rather dampen a paper-towel or disposable cloth and then clean and/or disinfect
- Clean hands immediately after gloves are removed.^{3,4}

For those shipping telehealth units to and from patients' houses, the CDC has stated that because of the poor survivability of these coronaviruses on surfaces, there is likely very low risk of spread from products or packaging that are shipped over a period of days or weeks at ambient temperatures.

Evidence suggests that COVID-19 can be transmitted less easily from soft surfaces than frequently-touched hard surfaces, such as a doorknob or elevator button.⁵ NIH scientists have found that COVID-19 can be detected in aerosols for up to 3 hours, up to 4 hours on copper, up to 24 hours on cardboard and up to 2 to 3 days on plastic and stainless steel.⁶ This may vary under different conditions (e.g. type of surface, temperature or humidity of the environment).⁷

EPA approved germicides for COVID-19: <https://www.americanchemistry.com/Novel-Coronavirus-Fighting-Products-List.pdf>



DISPOSABLE GLOVES



ANTIBIOMATIC SOAP & WIPES



BLEACH SOLUTION, 70% ALC

² <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/control-recommendations.html>

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html>

⁵ <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/as-coronavirus-spreads-many-questions-and-some-answers-2020022719004#g5>

⁶ <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/new-coronavirus-stable-hours-surfaces>

⁷ <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>

Guidelines for Interacting with Suspected COVID-19 Patients

Employers should select appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and provide it in accordance with [OSHA's PPE standards \(29 CFR 1910 Subpart I\)](#). The CDC recommends the following PPE:

Gloves

- Perform hand hygiene, then put on clean, non-sterile gloves upon entry into the patient room or care area. Change gloves if they become torn or heavily contaminated.
- Remove and discard gloves when leaving the patient room or care area, and immediately perform hand hygiene.

Gowns

- Put on a clean isolation gown upon entry into the patient room or area. Change the gown if it becomes soiled. Remove and discard the gown in a dedicated container for waste or linen before leaving the patient room or care area. Disposable gowns should be discarded after use. Cloth gowns should be laundered after each use.

Respiratory Protection

- Use respiratory protection (i.e., a respirator) that is at least as protective as a fit-tested NIOSH-certified disposable N95 filtering facepiece respirator before entry into the patient room or care area. See appendix for respirator definition.
- Disposable respirators should be removed and discarded after exiting the patient's room or care area and closing the door. Perform hand hygiene after discarding the respirator.
- If reusable respirators (e.g., powered air purifying respirator/PAPR) are used, they must be cleaned and disinfected according to manufacturer's reprocessing instructions prior to re-use.
- Respirator use must be in the context of a complete respiratory protection program in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Respiratory Protection standard ([29 CFR 1910.134](#)). Staff should be medically cleared and fit-tested if using respirators with tight-fitting facepieces (e.g., a NIOSH-certified disposable N95) and trained in the proper use of respirators, safe removal and disposal, and medical contraindications to respirator use.

Eye Protection

- Put on eye protection (e.g., goggles, a disposable face shield that covers the front and sides of the face) upon entry to the patient room or care area. Remove eye protection before leaving the patient room or care area. Reusable eye protection (e.g., goggles) must be cleaned and disinfected according to manufacturer's reprocessing instructions prior to re-use. Disposable eye protection should be discarded after use.⁸

⁸ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/healthcare-supply-ppe.html>



DISPOSABLE
GLOVES



RESPIRATORY
PROTECTION



GOWNS



EYE
PROTECTION

HRS' Sanitization Guidelines

Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, the HRS logistics team implemented a comprehensive policy for managing telehealth units that arrive at our warehouse, almost identical to the above CDC guidelines.

We first ensure the safety of our staff by strictly adhering to the above PPE policy (specifically in regard to gloves and face masks) so that we can prevent the spread of any possible contagious disease that may be present inside a telehealth unit.

All equipment is then inspected in our “dirty” room and then cleaned and disinfected using both Clorox disinfectant wipes as well as 70% isopropyl alcohol wipes. Both 70% isopropyl alcohol and Clorox disinfectant wipes are great for cleaning and sanitizing telehealth equipment and are recommended by the HRS logistics team.

Once the equipment is cleaned and sanitized, it is brought to our clean room where it is then quality assured, tested, and re-kitted so that it can be shipped out to the next patient.

Questions/Comments/Concerns

HRS is here to be your partner throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. If you have any questions or concerns about inventory management and sanitization of your telehealth equipment, please send us an email at logistics@healthrecoveryolutions.com.