

ANDWAY HEALTHCARE

GUIDE TO WIPES



andway
healthcare in hand

Cleaning, sanitising and disinfecting all mean very different things.

Cleaning removes dirt, debris, and some germs while sanitising and disinfecting specifically address germs. Sanitising lowers the number of germs to safe levels but doesn't necessarily kill them, while disinfecting calls upon chemicals to kill the majority of germs present.

Cleaning and sanitising are two things you already know are vital to keeping your home clean and free of dirt, allergens, and day-to-day germs. Disinfecting, on the other hand, is vital in the combat against viruses such as COVID-19.

ANTIBACTERIAL VS ANTI VIRAL/MICROBIAL WIPES

LETS LOOK AT THE DEFINITIONS:

Antibacterial: Destructive or inhibiting the growth of bacteria, an antibacterial is a chemical that specifically kills bacteria cells. Antibacterial technologies are effective against a broad spectrum of harmful bacteria including E. coli and MRSA.* They will typically incorporate silver active ingredients, allowing for successful application in a wide variety of product types.

Anti-viral/microbial: Destructive to or inhibiting the growth of microorganisms, an agent that inhibits the growth of a microorganism or kills such an organism outright.

While antibacterial products like soap and detergents prevent the development of bacteria, anti-viral/microbial agents like alcohol-based hand sanitisers prevent the spread of bacterial, fungi, parasites and some viruses and offer a greater level of product protection by continuously inhibiting the growth of microbes on surfaces for very long periods of time. The broad spectrum performance of antimicrobial substances makes them perfect for use in hygiene critical environments such as schools, hospitals, and commercial kitchens. Typical active ingredients include silver or zinc.

Antibacterial hand wipes destroy bacteria, while antimicrobial wipes kill bacteria and other microorganisms that can cause sickness. Both antibacterial and antimicrobial wipes can be components of effective hand hygiene.

SANITISING WIPES

Most sanitising wipes contain one or more alcohols: ethanol, isopropanol or a combination. A 60-95% alcohol content (most will say on the label) is needed for it to inactivate viruses, including COVID-19.

DISINFECTANT WIPES

Do not confuse cleaning with disinfecting.

Disinfecting does not replace cleaning with either good old soap and water or a chosen cleaning product.

You will still need to clean before you disinfect or you could just be spreading bacteria with disinfecting wipes for example!

ALCOHOL VS ALCOHOL-FREE WIPES

Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 a choice was freely made on whether to use an alcohol based or non-alcohol based wipes or sprays, both with differing applications, cleansing properties and 'killer' claims. Alcohol based products (usually containing ethanol or isopropyl) and the alcohol % came into sharp focus with the outbreak with the WHO stating a minimum 60% alcohol in sanitising products to effectively kill the virus and now clearly visible on all marketing material and packaging.

Product	Kills virus	Suitable for hard surfaces	Suitable for skin contact	Suitable for food contact	Regulated
Disinfectant wipe	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Anti-bacterial wipe	✗	✗	✓	Surface must be rinsed before contact with food	✓
Alcohol based Sanitising wipe	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Anti-viral wipe	✓	✓	✓	Surface must be rinsed before contact with food	✓
Soap and water	✓ ...and recommended by WHO	✗	✓	✗	✓

SOAP AND WATER VS WIPES

There is a very good reason why the WHO recommend 20 second hand washing with soap and water and this is because the detergents and surfactants in any type of soap are innately antic-bacterial in that they remove surface attached bacteria and viruses.

Both soap and hand sanitiser are both effective against COVID-19 as it is an 'enveloped virus' which means its viral genetic material is coated in a lipid, fatty layer. Both soap and alcohol based hand sanitisers inactivate the virus by dissolving this layer causing the virus to fall apart and stopping it from binding to our cells.

CORRECT USE IS KEY NO MATTER WHICH WIPE YOU CHOOSE

Every kind of wipe has a 'kill claim' on the description, which indicates what it will kill in a certain amount of time. In a lab, wipes are tested for everything from hepatitis B to influenza to staphylococcus. If the wipe kills the germ, it can be listed on the container. How long the surface must remain wet to kill the germ is spelled out on the container, too.

WET WIPES

Regular 'wet wipes' are still great for personal care and cleansing purposes but not part of your infection control or PPE portfolio.

DRY WIPES

Dry wipes are made from a strong and absorbent polypropylene material, designed for applying creams, lotions or soaps.