

# Surface disinfection: differentiation between key terms

	<b>Routine disinfection</b> (also: regular, prophylactic or preventive disinfection)	<b>Disinfection in the event of outbreaks</b>
Purpose	To control the spread of pathogens during patient care and treatment.	To quickly and reliably prohibit the spread of pathogens such as noroviruses or <i>Clostridium difficile</i> in case these occur increasingly.
Surfaces concerned	Surfaces that presumably became contaminated with infectious materials without noticeable or visible evidence, e.g. bedframes, doorknobs.	All surfaces that are disinfected during terminal disinfection plus bathtubs, kitchens and canteens.
Disinfection measure	Wipe disinfection with surface disinfectants that are bactericidal, yeasticidal and virucidal against enveloped viruses.*	The necessary spectrum of activity depends on the type of pathogen.*
	<b>Terminal disinfection</b> (also: final disinfection)	<b>Disinfection in case of officially ordered decontaminations</b> (also: epidemics)
Purpose	To prepare complete rooms or areas for subsequent patients or residents for them not to acquire an infection during treatment or care.	To prevent epidemic outbreaks with communicable, notifiable diseases.
Surfaces concerned	Rooms and areas where an infected or colonised patient/resident has been cared for or treated. Depending on the disease or type of pathogen, all near-patient surfaces/objects and those within reach, respectively that are or may be contaminated, e.g. floors or walls.	All surfaces that are disinfected during terminal disinfection plus bathtubs, kitchens and canteens.
Disinfection measure	Wipe disinfection with surface disinfectants that are bactericidal, yeasticidal and virucidal against enveloped viruses. If necessary, use other concentrations and disinfectants with a broader spectrum of activity and pay attention to other exposure times than for routine disinfection.*	Only use disinfectants and procedures recommended by the agency that officially ordered the decontamination.*

\*Applies to all disinfection measures: when surfaces are contaminated visibly, first of all collect organic material with a disposable wipe soaked with disinfectant.

Source: 1. Robert Koch-Institut (2004) Anforderungen an die Hygiene bei der Reinigung und Desinfektion von Flächen. Empfehlung der Kommission für Krankenhaushygiene und Infektionsprävention beim Robert Koch-Institut Bundesgesundheitsbl Gesundheitsforsch Gesundheitsschutz, 47: 51–61.

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