

Living Evidence Synthesis 18.2: Effectiveness of Cleaning and Disinfecting for reducing transmission of Respiratory Infectious Diseases in non-healthcare community-based settings.

Date of Literature Search: 28 March 2024

This living evidence synthesis (LESs) is part of a suite of LESs of the best-available evidence about the effectiveness of public health and social measures (PHSMs) (quarantine and isolation, masks, ventilation, hand hygiene, cleaning, and disinfecting) in preventing transmission of respiratory infectious diseases. This is the 2nd version of this LES, which includes enhancements in scope from the first version by: 1) expanding the primary outcomes from COVID-19 transmission to include other prioritized Respiratory Infectious Diseases (Respiratory Syncytial Virus, Influenza and Group A Streptococcus); and 2) expanded searches to include these outcomes and to search further back in time. The next update to this and other LESs in the series is to be determined, but the most up-todate versions in the suite are available [here.](https://www.mcmasterforum.org/find-domestic-evidence/partner-evidence-products) We provide context for synthesizing evidence about public health and social measures in Box 1.

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Questions

What is the best available evidence about the effectiveness of cleaning and disinfecting products and strategies in reducing transmission of Respiratory Infectious Diseases (RIDs) (SARS-CoV-2, RSV, influenza, group A streptococcus [GAS]) in non-healthcare community-based settings?

What are the unintended consequences associated with the use of cleaning and disinfecting products and strategies to reduce the transmission of RIDs?

What is the best available evidence about the effectiveness of cleaning and disinfecting products and strategies for deactivating/eliminating RIDs on surfaces in non-healthcare community-based settings?

What is the best available evidence about the efficacy/effectiveness of cleaning and disinfecting products and strategies for deactivating/eliminating SARS-CoV 2 on surfaces assessed in vitro studies? *(Last updated LES 18.1)*

Executive summary

Background

- COVID-19 is a well-known respiratory infectious disease that has greatly impacted people's lives since its emergence. However, there are other respiratory infectious diseases (RIDs) that significantly affect human health, such as influenza, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) infection, and Group A Streptococcus (GAS) infections (1).
- Human influenza A and B viruses, which routinely spread among people, are responsible for seasonal influenza epidemics each year. Although avian influenza virus (AIV) primarily affects animals, it can cause sporadic infections in humans (2). RSV causes annual outbreaks of respiratory diseases in all age groups, but it primarily affects children and is the most common cause of hospitalization in infants (3). GAS can cause both non-invasive and invasive diseases. While it can affect people of all ages, populations that frequent or live in crowded environments such as schools, military training centers, and daycare centers, are at a higher risk of GAS infections (4).
- These RIDs are mainly transmitted from person to person through infectious respiratory particles that are generated when infected people breathe, talk, cough, sneeze, sing, or shout. However, environmental transmission through surfaces and fomites is another important route that can be intervened (1).
- Non-pharmaceutical interventions are part of the control measures for the transmission of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), RSV, influenza, and GAS, and cleaning and disinfecting are recommended activities to reduce viral transmission (5).
- In March 2020, following the identification of SARS-CoV-2, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2, which initially identified 250 surface disinfectants that met EPA's criteria for efficacy under the Emerging Viral Pathogens Guide for Antimicrobial Pesticides (6). By August 2020, the List N included 482 surface disinfectants (7).
- However, there is little evidence to inform or support decision making about which types of cleaning and/or disinfecting products and strategies are most effective at reducing transmission of COVID-19 and/or other respiratory illnesses and how often cleaning and/or disinfecting affects the transmission in community settings (8).

High level summary of key findings

Profile of included studies

- We identified 5,664 reports, from which we included 41 studies that addressed question 1 ($n=9$), question 2 ($n=10$), question 3 ($n=8$) and/or question 4 ($n=14$), and:
- For influenza virus, RSV and GAS, the search period included articles from January 1^{st} 2016 to March 28th 2024. Searches for SARS-CoV-2 virus included articles from January 1st 2020. Most of the included studies were published between 2020-2022 (n=28), followed by 2023-2024 (n=9); and were commonly conducted in the U.S. $(n=11)$, Italy $(n=4)$, Bangladesh $(n=4)$, and United Kingdom (n=4).
	- o SARS-CoV-2 was the microorganism most studied (n=29), followed by AIV (10) and influenza/influenza-like illness (n=2). No studies addressed RSV or GAS.

- o Study designs included quasi-experimental (n=4), cohort (n=5), case-control (n=3), crosssectional ($n=15$), and in vitro experiments ($n=14$)
- o Study settings included residential settings (n=5); surveys targeting workplace or households $(n=8)$; educational settings $(n=1)$; transport, vehicles and hubs settings $(n=2)$; Long Term Care facilities (LTCFs) (n=2); live bird markets (LBMs), duck abattoirs and farms (n=9); and laboratory settings (n=14).
- Studies provided information for the transmission/incidence outcome (n=9), deactivating/ eliminating virus on surfaces ($n=24$), and unintended consequences ($n=8$).
- Overall, there were several significant limitations across the studies included in this report, with nine studies ultimately being rated as critical risk of bias (RoB), eight as serious RoB, seven as moderate RoB and three as low RoB. Common limitations included poor adjustment for confounding factors; invalid or unclear exposure measurement; and lack of details about composition, dosage, and frequency of use of disinfectants and cleaners. In many cases, the significant limitations of the included studies made the determination of meaningful conclusions challenging.

Key findings in relation to question 1: Effectiveness of cleaning and disinfecting strategies on RIDs transmission reduction

- COVID-19 transmission
	- o Two of six studies conducted in community settings found a benefit of cleaning and disinfecting strategies (implement cleaning and disinfecting strategies, increase cleaning frequency) in reducing SARS-CoV-2 transmission/infection.
	- o Only one of four studies found a benefit from strategies related to increasing cleaning and disinfection frequency (using Chlorine dioxide once a day or more in floors, doors and window handles, indoor air, tables and toilets cleaning), while two studies found nonsignificant differences.
	- o One study conducted in Spain, found that disinfectants containing ethanol or bleach didn't lower transmission except when applied to purchased products.
- Influenza/influenza-like illness transmission
	- o One study found that increased frequent surface disinfection in Lebanese residential settings was associated with a lower influenza-like illness risk
- Transmission of other respiratory illnesses infections
	- Two of two studies found a benefit from implementing versus not implementing cleaning and disinfection strategies in farms and LBMs against AIV.

Key findings in relation to question 2: Effectiveness of cleaning and disinfecting strategies on deactivating/eliminating RIDs on surfaces in real life community settings

- SARS-CoV-2 deactivation/elimination
	- o One study found that Proactive Cleaning and Hygiene Solution (PCHS) sanitation, which involved the use of a probiotic-based cleaning agent applied once a day compared to the use of conventional chlorine-based disinfectants, applied four times per day, reduced SARS-CoV-2 presence on subway trains.
- Influenza virus deactivation elimination

- o One study found that implementation of an educational strategy and PURELLTM Surface (An alcohol-based antimicrobial spray for hard surfaces; GOJO Industries Inc) eradicated the influenza virus from surfaces.
- Deactivation/elimination of other respiratory illnesses and infections
	- o One study compared cleaning using detergent in Live-bird markets (LBMs) against cleaning with water founding detergent superior for viral elimination.
	- o Comparisons between frequency of implementation of different cleaning/disinfecting strategies were addressed in one study that found more frequent cleaning and disinfecting practices in LBMs against AIV to be superior.
	- o Five studies compared implementing versus not implementing cleaning/disinfecting strategies effects on AIV contamination. Two of these studies found benefits of implementing cleaning protocols and one study found benefits from monthly cleaning when compared to not implementing these strategies; while no differences were found for daily cleaning, weekly/monthly disinfection, FA[O](#page-3-0)¹-intervened LBMs compared with no implementation of these strategies.
	- o One before and after study that compared initial viral loads with postintervention viral loads. found no important benefits from quaternary ammonium single use on eliminating AIV from trucks and crates.

Key findings in relation to question 3: Unintended consequences associated with the use of cleaning and disinfecting products

- COVID-19 pandemic unintended consequences related to the use of cleaning/disinfecting products
	- o Five of six studies found an increase in poisoning control calls after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ingestion was the main route but a notable increase in inhalation cases, particularly with bleach-containing products, was noted. Increased cleaning frequency during the pandemic also led to skin disturbances and shortness of breath in adults
	- o A global survey linked chlorine exposure to ocular effects, while alcohols and formaldehyde were associated with skin and neurological effects, respectively.
	- o One study highlighted increased ocular injuries in children due to chemical burns from cleaning products, particularly laundry detergent and bleach

Key findings in relation to question 4: Efficacy of cleaning and disinfecting on SARS-CoV-2 deactivation/elimination from surfaces on controlled laboratory settings

• The evidence from in vitro studies, most of it comparing the active ingredient versus placebo of deactivating/eliminating SARS-CoV-2 addresses: VirusendTM on stainless steel (SS); ethanol 50% and 70% on Kraft paper, SS, and glass; sodium hypochlorite on parchment paper, glass, SS, polypropylene (PP), and kraft; bleach on 3D printed material, SS, styrene–butadiene rubber (SBR), and paint; quaternary ammonium on 3D printed material; hydrogen peroxide 3% on 3D printed material and SS; C360TM on SS, SBR, paint and bus seat fabric (SF); VOTM on SS, and SF; quaternary ammonium compound (QAC) disinfectant wipes on glass Petri dish; citric acid disinfectant wipes on glass Petri dish; ethanol/ QAC Disinfectant spray on glass Petri dish; Ready

¹ FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization

to use QAC cleaner on glass Petri dish; Sani-24TM on glass surfaces; PMMA-H2O2 MCs on nonwoven fabric samples; high ozone gas concentrations on polystyrene plastic, glass and steel; dry fogging of 8,700 ppm hypochlorous solution on plastic plates; dry fogging of 56,400 ppm hydrogen peroxide solution on plastic plates.

Overview of evidence and knowledge gaps

- There is scarce evidence on the effectiveness of cleaning and disinfecting products/strategies, specifically in community settings, to reduce the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 (two cohort studies, two cross-sectional studies in residential settings, and two cross-sectional studies in LTCFs) and influenza (one study in residential settings for influenza-like illnesses, two AIV studies in poultry farms and markets). There is a lack of evidence regarding the effectiveness of cleaning and disinfecting products/strategies, specifically in community settings, to reduce the transmission of RSV and GAS (no studies were retrieved during this search).
- There is scarce evidence for the outcome of the deactivation/elimination of SARS-CoV-2 (one quasi-experimental study in urban subways) and influenza (eight quasi-experimental and observational studies mostly in poultry farms and markets) on surfaces in real-life communitybased settings. There is a lack of evidence on the effectiveness of cleaning and disinfecting products/strategies on the deactivation/elimination of microorganisms on surfaces, specifically in community settings, to reduce the transmission of RSV and GAS (no studies retrieved during this search).
- The unintended consequences of using cleaning and disinfection products to mitigate RIDs in non-healthcare settings are not well-documented. Existing evidence, primarily from crosssectional studies and surveys, lacks detailed information on exposure frequency, concentration, and specific chemical compounds, which hinders the assessment of health impacts. No analytical observational or experimental studies were found that evaluate the unintended consequences in these contexts.

Box 1: Context for synthesizing evidence about public health and social measures (PHSMs)

This series of living evidence syntheses was commissioned to understand the effects of PHSMs during a global pandemic to inform current and future use of PHSMs for preventing transmission of respiratory infectious diseases.

General considerations for identifying, appraising and synthesizing evidence about PHSMs

- PHSMs are population-level interventions and typically evaluated in observational studies.
	- o Many PHSMs are interventions implemented at a population level, rather than at the level of individuals or clusters of individuals such as in clinical interventions.
	- o Since it is typically not feasible and/or ethical to randomly allocate entire populations to different interventions, the effects of PHSMs are commonly evaluated using observational study designs that evaluate PHSMs in real-word settings.
	- o As a result, a lack of evidence from randomized controlled trials (RCTs) does not necessarily mean the available evidence in this series of LESs is weak.
- Instruments for apprising the risk of bias in observational studies have been developed; however, rigorously tested and validated instruments are only available for clinical interventions.
	- o Such instruments generally indicate that a study has less risk of bias when it was possible to directly assess outcomes and control for potential confounders for individual study participants.

- o Studies assessing PHSMs at the population level are not able to provide such assessments for all relevant individuallevel variables that could affect outcomes, and therefore cannot be classified as low risk of bias.
- Given feasibility considerations related to synthesizing evidence in a timely manner to inform decision-making for PHSMs during a global pandemic, highly focused research questions and inclusion criteria for literature searches were required.
	- o As a result, we acknowledge that this series of living evidence syntheses about the effectiveness of specific PHSMs (i.e., quarantine and isolation; mask use, including unintended consequences; ventilation, reduction of contacts, physical distancing, hand hygiene and cleaning and disinfecting measures), interventions that promote adherence to PHSMs, and the effectiveness of combinations of PHSMs – does not incorporate all existing relevant evidence on PHSMs.
	- o Ongoing work on this suite of products will allow us to broaden the scope of this review for a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of PHSMs.
	- o Decision-making with the best available evidence requires synthesizing findings from studies conducted in realworld settings (e.g., with people affected by misinformation, different levels of adherence to an intervention, different definitions and uses of the interventions, and in different stages of the pandemic, such as before and after availability of COVID-19 vaccines).

Our approach to presenting findings with an appraisal of risk of bias of included studies

To ensure we used robust methods to identify, appraise and synthesize findings and to provide clear messages about the effects of different PHSMs, we:

- acknowledge that a lack of evidence from RCTs does not mean the evidence available is weak
- assessed included studies for ROB using the approach described in the methods box
- typically introduce the ROB assessments only once early in the document if they are consistent across sub-questions, sub-groups and outcomes, and provide insight about the reasons for the ROB assessment findings (e.g., confounding with other complementary PHSMs) and sources of additional insights (e.g., findings from LES 20 in this series that evaluates combinations of PHSMs)
- note where there are lower levels of ROB where appropriate
- note where it is likely that risk of bias (e.g., confounding variables) may reduce the strength of association with a PHSM and an outcome from the included studies
- identify when little evidence was found and when it was likely due to literature search criteria that prioritized RCTs over observational studies.

Implications for synthesizing evidence about PHSMs

Despite the ROB for studies conducted at the population level that are identified in studies in this LES and others in the series, they provide the best-available evidence about the effects of interventions in real life. Moreover, ROB (and GRADE, which was not used for this series of LESs) were designed for clinical programs, services and products, and there is an ongoing need to identify whether and how such assessments and the communication of such assessments, need to be adjusted for public-health programs, services and measures and for health-system arrangements.

Findings

● Overall, 5664 records were identified through an evidence search, 5143 were screened in title and abstract, 667 in full text, and 41 studies were used to complete this summary. The reasons for excluding the remaining 626 studies are reported in [Appendix 2.](#page-59-0) [Figure 1](#page-10-0) presents the PRISMA flow diagram.

Highlights of changes in this report

- Scope has been expanded to include respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), influenza, and Group A streptococcus (GAS).
- 26 new studies have been added since the previous edition of this living evidence synthesis, which is signaled by highlighting in yellow. The studies included results for SARS-CoV-2 (14) and influenza (12).
- New data on reducing transmission of RIDs, including SARS-CoV-2 and influenza, have been added, drawn from two studies with moderate RoB (9,10), three with serious RoB (11–13), and three with critical RoB (14–16).
- New data on deactivating/eliminating RIDs microorganisms from surfaces in non-healthcare community-based settings have been added, drawn from three studies with low RoB (17–19), four with moderate RoB (20–23), and three with critical RoB (24–26).
- New data on the unintended consequences of cleaning and disinfecting, primarily focusing on SARS-CoV-2, have been added, drawn from one study with moderate RoB (27), five with serious RoB (28–32), and two with critical RoB (33,34).
- Table 4 on in vitro studies reporting on deactivating/eliminating SARS-CoV-2 was not updated in this version of the report.

Box 2: Our approach

We retrieved studies by searching: 1) PubMed; 2) Science Direct; and 3) CINAHL. Searches were conducted for studies reported in English, conducted with humans and published since 1 January 2016. Our detailed search strategy is included in **[Appendix 1](#page-56-0)**.

Studies were identified up to five days before the version release date. Studies that report on empirical data with a comparator were considered for inclusion, with modelling studies, simulation studies, case reports, case series, and press releases excluded. A full list of included studies is provided in **Tables 1-5**. Studies excluded at the last stages of reviewing are provided in **[Appendix](#page-59-0) [2](#page-59-0)**.

Population of interest: All population groups that report data related to SARS-CoV-2, RSV, influenza, GAS.

Intervention and control/comparator: Cleaning: Cleaning surfaces and objects with soap (or detergent) and water to reduce the amount of viral particles by physically removing them. Disinfecting: Disinfecting indicates use of a disinfectant product on surfaces or objects to deactivate COVID-19 or other viruses.

Primary outcome: Reduction in transmission of COVID-19, RSV, influenza, GAS

Secondary outcomes: Reported unintended consequences attributed to the implementation of cleaning and disinfecting strategies; Deactivating/eliminating SARS-CoV-2 on surfaces.

Data extraction: Data extraction was conducted by one team member and checked for accuracy and consistency by another using the template provided in **[Appendix 3](#page-75-0)**.

Critical appraisal: Risk of Bias of individual studies (by outcome) was assessed using validated ROB tools. For RCTs we used ROB-2, and for observational studies, we used ROBINS-I and, for In Vitro studies we used OHAT. Judgements for the domains within these tools were decided by consensus within synthesis team and undergo revision with subsequent iterations of the LES as needed. Once a study had met one criterion that makes it "critical" risk of bias, it was dropped from further risk of bias assessment (exception: if limited data available for an outcome). Our detailed approach to critical appraisal is provided in **[Appendix 4](#page-77-0)**.

Summaries: We summarized the evidence by presenting narrative evidence profiles across studies by outcome measure. Future versions may include statistical pooling of results if deemed appropriate.

Summary of findings about the primary outcome: Reducing transmission of RIDs (n=9)

Eight new studies have been added since the previous edition of this LES that reported on transmission/infection outcomes (9–16) (highlighted in yellow). The studies included results for SARS-CoV-2 (5) and influenza (3). The characteristics, findings, and assessment of the RoB of each study are presented in [Table 1.](#page-13-0)

SARS-CoV-2

Overall, six studies reporting on transmission/infection reduction outcomes addressed SARS-CoV-2. All of the studies were observational (Cohort=3, Cross-sectional=2, Case-control=1), and were evaluated as critical to moderate RoB (RoB).

Studies reported on different settings: two cross-sectional studies of critical RoB (15) and moderate RoB (9) in LTCFs; and, four studies in residential settings, corresponding to two cohort studies with critical RoB (8,14), one cross-sectional study with serious RoB (11) and one case-control study with serious RoB (13).

Long-term care facilities (LTCFs): Two studies compared different frequencies of cleaning/ disinfecting. One study reported that daily versus less frequent floor washing during the Omicron dominance increased the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection [aIRR 2.38 (95% CI, 1.03–5.52)], although no significant difference was found during pre-Omicron dominance [aIRR, 1.25 (95% CI, 0.49-3.17); $p = 0.64$ or with non-stratified results [aIRR, 1.63 (95% CI, 0.83-3.22) $p = 0.16$]. (9). The second study found no differences in the frequency of cleaning and disinfection of high-contact surfaces between the LTCFs with the highest prevalence and those with the lowest prevalence of COVID-19. Of the five infection prevention and control categories explored, the disinfection indicators were the ones with the lowest compliance, and when the LTFCs with the highest and lowest prevalence were compared, the implementation of the recommendations for disinfection (daily frequency of cleaning of areas of high contact, training the person on cleaning, cleaning program registration, and certified personnel) did not show statistically significant differences (p=0.44) (15).

Residential settings: Two studies compared different frequencies of cleaning (8,13). One of two studies found a benefit from strategies related to increasing cleaning and disinfection frequency (using Chlorine dioxide once a day or more in floors, doors and window handles, indoor air, tables and toilets cleaning) (8), while the other one reported that cleaning objects that could have viruses was associated with an increased COVID-19 risk [aOR 1.34 (95% CI, 1.25–1.43)] (the type of cleaning done or whether any cleaning products were used was not specified) (13).

Two studies compared cleaning strategies versus no implementation of a cleaning strategy (11,14). When compared with not implementing the strategy, residential disinfection was found to reduce the risk of household transmission of SARS-CoV-2 [OR, 0.78 (95% CI 0.63–0.95)] (14). The other study reported that bleach or ethanol surface disinfection, disinfection of shoes, and washing clothes did not significantly affect COVID-19 risk. However, the application of a disinfectant to purchased products was associated with a lower prevalence of COVID-19 (11).

Influenza/influenza-like illness

One cross-sectional study with moderate RoB reported on this outcome in residential settings (10). The study compared different frequencies of surface disinfection, and reported that frequent surface disinfection in Lebanon residential settings was associated with a lower influenza-like illness risk among Lebanese adults [aOR 0.892 (95% CI, 0.632–0.911)] (10).

Avian Influenza Virus (AIV)

Two studies reported on this outcome in LBMs. The studies included one case-control with serious RoB (12) and one cohort with critical RoB (16). The two studies found a benefit from implementing versus not implementing cleaning and disinfection strategies in farms and LBMs against AIV. The risk of H9N2 infection on farms was reduced by both cage cleaning [OR, 0.24 (95% Cl, 0.1–0.57]) and the use of foot baths before entering the farm [OR, 0.24 (95% Cl, 0.08–0.79)] (16). Mandatory routine disinfection in LBMs decreased HPAI H5N1 infection risk [OR, 0.13 (95% Cl, 0.5–0.33)] (12) .

Summary of findings about the primary outcome: Deactivating/eliminating RIDs on surfaces in non-healthcare community-based settings (n=10)

Ten new studies have been added since the previous edition of this LES that reported on deactivating/eliminating RIDs from surface outcomes (17–26) (highlighted in yellow). The studies included results for SARS-CoV-2 (1) and influenza (9). The characteristics, findings, and assessment of the RoB of each study are presented in [Table 2.](#page-22-0)

SARS-CoV-2

Only one cohort study with low RoB (17) in transport vehicles or hubs settings was found. The study compared different products and found that PCHS sanitation, which involved the use of a probiotic-based cleaning agent applied once a day compared to the use of conventional chlorinebased disinfectants, applied four times per day, reduced SARS-CoV-2 RNA presence and total viral copy number in subway trains (9.6% samples were found positive in control train, whereas 3.7% were found positive in PCHS train), these differences were described as significant.

Influenza / influenza-like illness

One quasi-experimental study with critical RoB (25) in educational settings was found. Implementation of infection control measures in schools (Phase 1: Installation of PURELLTM Surface Spray at the point of care in athletic training rooms; Phase 2: Initiation of educational interventions with placement of posters and checklists; Phase 3: targeted educational material distribution) led to the eradication of the influenza virus from surfaces, indicating the efficacy of targeted interventions.

AIV

Overall, eight studies reported on this outcome. The studies included two quasi-experimental designs with critical RoB (24,26), three cross-sectional with moderate RoB (20–22), cohort with moderate RoB (23) and one case-control with low RoB (19) conducted in Live birds Markets (LBMs) and poultry farms. One quasi-experimental study with low RoB (18), addressed this outcome in transport, vehicles or hubs settings.

LBMs and poultry farms: One study compared enhanced cleaning with detergent with cleaning with water, finding detergent superior for viral elimination (21).

Comparisons between frequency of implementation of different cleaning/disinfecting strategies were addressed in one study that found that increasing cleaning frequency (daily), disinfection frequency (weekly) and use of running water in stalls significantly reduced AIV presence in LBMs $(p<0.01)$ (20).

Three of five studies that compared implementing versus not implementing cleaning/disinfecting strategies found benefits on this outcome. Regular monthly cleaning practices in poultry shops were protective against environmental contamination with influenza A viruses (aOR, 0.47 (95% CI, 0.28– 0.8); p < 0.01)(22). While Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)-intervened LBMs had better biosecurity practices, there was no significant difference in HPAI H5N1 prevalence compared to non-intervened LBMs [RR, 1.1 (95% CI 0.44–2.76)] (23). Despite enhanced cleaning and disinfection protocols in duck abattoirs, variable efficacy was observed, indicating that factors such as the initial contamination load influenced cleaning and disinfection effectiveness (24). Improved protocols with multi-step cleaning and disinfection processes (cleaning with low-pressure soaking and detergent, quaternary ammonium + glutaraldehyde and virucides) in duck abattoirs showed variable efficacy, with some still testing positive for AIV genome post-intervention (26). Implementing cleaning and disinfection of hard-surfaced barn entry pads reduced the risk of HPAI H5N2 infection in egg layer farms [OR, 0.16 , $P = 0.01$] (19).

Transport vehicles or hubs: The use of citric acid-based disinfectant with coverage greater than 70% on agricultural vehicles resulted in a 4-log viral reduction, regardless of the type of disinfection facilities and vehicles, and coverage of at least 99% with sufficient contact time resulted in a reduction of at least 5 logs of AIV ($\mathbb{R}^2 = 0.4840$) (18).

Summary of findings about the secondary outcome: Unintended consequences of cleaning and disinfecting (n=8)

Eight new studies that report on unintended consequences have been added since the previous edition of this LES (27–34). (highlighted in yellow). The studies included results for SARS-CoV-2. The characteristics, findings and assessment of RoB of each study are presented in [Table 3.](#page-32-0)

SARS-CoV-2

Eight cross-sectional studies reported on this outcome, including two studies with critical RoB (33,34), five with serious RoB (28–32), and one of moderate RoB (27).

Five of six studies found an increase in poisoning control calls after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (27,28,30,32,33). Italian Poison Control Center reported increased calls regarding disinfectants and decreased calls for cleaners, with significant changes in exposure frequencies (28). The Michigan Poison Center reported exposures rose by 50%, and disinfectant-related calls doubled. Disinfectant calls significantly increased by 42.8% ($P < 0.001$), whereas cleaner calls slightly increased from 5.1% to 5.4% ($P = 0.18$). Ingestion exposure calls decreased from 72.6% to 59.7% (P ≤ 0.001), but inhalation and dermal exposure calls increased (P ≤ 0.001). The ocular exposure calls remained stable (30). Italian poison control observed a 5% increase in the prevalence of exposure calls related to household disinfectants between 2019 and 2020 ($p<0.001$). The most frequently

reported products contained bleach, ethyl alcohol, or hydrogen peroxide. Most of the exposures were accidental. The main route of exposure was ingestion, but the greatest increase occurred through inhalation (33). Pharmacy One Poison Center from Jordan, reported a significant increase in toxic exposure calls during the lockdown, particularly for household cleaners and alcohol, with notable shifts in call sources and exposure patterns, with the majority of exposures being at home and children aged below 5 years being the most affected (32).

One study analyzed ocular injuries in US children under 3 years of age. Chemical burn-related injuries, mainly from cleaning products, increased significantly during the pandemic (23.34% to 31.63%), with 71.75% attributed to cleaning products. Laundry detergents and bleach were the most common culprits (53.68%). Adjusting for confounders, the odds of chemical burns increased postpandemic [aOR 1.51 (95% CI, 1.10–2.08)] (34).

One study among 91,056 participants from 154 member countries of the United Nations found that participants commonly reported skin and respiratory effects of disinfectants. Dry skin and neurological effects were the most frequent and least frequent, respectively. Chlorine compounds were significantly associated with all adverse effects, including ocular effects [OR, 1.83 (95% CI, 1.74–1.9)] and throat irritation [OR, 2.00 (95% CI, 1.90–1.93)]. Alcohol or alcohol-based materials and sodium hypochlorite were linked to skin irritation [OR, 1.98 (95% CI, 1.87–2.09)]. Formaldehyde was associated with neurological effects [OR, 2.17 (95% CI, 1.92–2.44)] (29).

A Turkish survey found that 46.9% of the participants reported at least one issue linked to cleaning products during the pandemic. Of these, 68% had skin issues, 23% had respiratory difficulties, 3% had asthma attacks, and 6% had experienced poisoning. Most of the participants (71.3%) reported a single issue. Monthly bleach consumption was higher among those with cleaning product-related problems (mean 2.02 DS \pm 1.54) compared to those without cleaning product-related problems (mean 1.63 DS \pm 1.46), with no difference observed for other cleaning products ($p = 0.001$). The majority of complaints were mild skin problems, but severe issues such as breathing difficulties and asthma attacks were also reported (31).

Summary of findings about secondary outcome: Deactivating/eliminating SARS-CoV-2 on surfaces in in vitro studies (n=14). *Last updated LES 18.1*

Fourteen in vitro studies were included, reporting on deactivating/eliminating SARS-CoV-2 on surfaces as an outcome. The characteristics, findings and assessment of RoB of these studies are presented in [Table 4.](#page-40-0)

SARS-CoV-2

Nine in vitro studies with probably low RoB (35–43), and five in vitro studies with probably high RoB (44–48) were found.

One study compared different products and reported that the addition of anionic surfactants improves the virucidal efficacy of twelve fluids (ethanol, isopropanol, dodecylbenzenesulfonate [SDBS], sodium laureth sulfate [SLS], glycerin, liquid hand soap, dish soap, and water of standardized hardness [WSH]). Fluid S8 (70% isopropanol, 3% hand soap, and 27% WSH) showed the greatest virucidal efficacy on Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) material with polyurethane (PUR) surface coating after one minute of contact time (38).

Compared with initial viral titers single application of QAC Disinfectant wipes QAC, Citric acid Disinfectant wipes, Ethanol/QAC Disinfectant spray, and ready to use (RTU) QAC cleaner reduced SARS-CoV-2 titers in \geq 3.0 log in glass Petri dish, achieving the greatest reductions with Ethanol/QAC disinfectant and QAC RTU cleaner (41).

When compared with placebo or untreated controls, studies reported that single application of Ethanol 50% and 70% in Kraft paper, SS, and glass, after 1 minute of contact time; Ethanol 70% in LPDE, after 5 minutes of contact time; Sodium hypochlorite 1000 ppm in parchment paper, glass, SS, PP, and kraft after 5 minutes of contact time achieved elimination of SARS-CoV-2 titer (46); after 5 minutes of the intervention Bleach, Quaternary ammonium and Hydrogen peroxide 3% achieved elimination of SARS-CoV-2 titer on 3D printed material; after 5 minutes, single application of Isopropyl alcohol (IPA) did not achieve elimination of SARS-CoV-2 titer, although there was >95% inactivation of viruses (47).

Single application by spray method of $C360^{TM}$ on SS, styrene–butadiene rubber (SBR), paint and Bus seat fabric (SF); peroxide on SS; Vital OxideTM (VO) on SS and SF; CDC bleachTM, on SS, SBR, and paint, reduced SARS-CoV-2 titer compared to hard water. No difference between $C360^{TM}$ and hard water by Spray & Wipe method was observed on SS, SF, SRB and paint. No difference between hard water and peroxide or CDC bleachTM was observed on SF (40).

Pretreated SS discs with spray application of SiQAC-C18 product reduced SARS-CoV-2 titers after 10 minutes of exposure (39).

Application of Sani-24TM reduced SARS-CoV-2 titer in ≥4.22 log in glass surfaces after 48 hours of the intervention (48).

Single application of PMMA-H₂O₂ MCs reduced SARS-CoV-2 DNA in nonwoven fabric samples by 62.27% after 10 minutes of the intervention; by 75% after 30 minutes of the intervention and by 97.26% after one hour of the intervention (42). .

Dry fogging of 8,700 ppm hypochlorous and 56,400 ppm hydrogen peroxide solution reduced the SARS-CoV-2 titers on plastic plates compared to distilled water at 16 minutes of the intervention. Dry fogging of lower concentration of hypochlorous solution did not achieve reduction of SARS-CoV-2 titers on plastic plates compared to distilled water at any time point of the intervention (36).

Gaseous ozone 0.2 ppm application reduced SARS-CoV-2 titer in >99.9% in fleece, 96.8% in gauze, 93.3% in wood, 90% in glass and 82.2% in plastic, after 2 hours of the intervention (35). At high concentrations (5.0 g.min/m³) and 70% relative humidity, ozone gas application reduced the SARS-CoV-2 titers on polystyrene plastic well compared to air after one hour of the intervention. At high concentrations (15.0 g.min/m³) and 70% relative humidity, ozone gas application reduced the SARS-CoV-2 titers on glass and steel compared to air after one hour of the intervention. Lower concentrations of ozone gas application achieved limited of SARS-CoV-2 titers on glass and steel compared to air after one hour of the intervention(45).

Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram [\(Page, 2021\)](https://www.bmj.com/content/372/bmj.n71)

*Three studies previously excluded

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Table 1: Summary of studies reporting on effectiveness of cleaning and disinfecting in preventing RIDs. (n=9)

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RIDs Reference and Country Setting and time covered Study characteristics Summary of key findings in relation to the outcome ROB Key outcomes: Household Transmission Rate SARS- $CoV-2$ **VOCs assessed**: None Francis et al, 2023 (13) United Kingdom Residential setting. November 2020 until the end of June 2021. **Design**: Cross-sectional study. The authors conducted an online questionnaire study recruiting members of the UK public from November 2020 to May 2021. They assessed the association between self-reported COVID-19 illness and reported NPI use. **Intervention**: Nonpharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) including cleaning things that might have virus on them (e.g. doors, taps) during the last two weeks. Measured using a five-point Likert scale: 'Never (or almost never)', 'Sometimes', 'Quite often', 'Very often', 'Always (or almost always). **Sample**: 36,199. Over 848,000 text message invitations were sent. **Population:** Adult participants who completed the survey registered with 116 practices in all parts of England • In people in the United Kingdom, between November 2020 and June 2021, cleaning objects that could have viruses was a risk factor for COVID-19 infection [aOR 1.34 (95% CI 1.25– 1.43)] **NPI COVID-19 infection Never Sometimes Quite often Very often Always** Cleaning things Yes $(n = 2337)$ 209 (8.9) 452 (19.3) 471 (20.2) 582 (24.9) 623 (26.7) No $(n = 23,346)$ 3024 (13.0) 6093 (26.1) 5101 (21.9) 5436 (23.3) 3692 (15.8) **Association between use of cleaning things, and exposure to crowded places COVID-19 Illness N & OR Unadjusted Model [1](#page-15-0)**² **Model [2](#page-15-1)**³ **Model [3](#page-15-2)**⁴ Any use of NPIs, and any exposure to crowded places N 25,683 22,270 16,819 12,566 OR (95% CI) **1.52 (1.31 to 1.76) 1.39 (1.19 to 1.63) 1.38 (1.15 to 1.64) 1.39 (1.06 to 1.81)** Reported frequency of use of NPIs, and frequency of exposure to crowded places N 25,683 22,270 16,819 12,566 OR (95% CI) **1.26 (1.22 to 1.31) 1.24 (1.19 to 1.29) 1.24 (1.19 to 1.30) 1.34 (1.25 to 1.43)** Limitations: This study evaluated the association of multiple self-reported non-pharmaceutical interventions with the risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection. The interpretation of the results must be read in light of the limitations. The authors state that many of the results obtained were unexpected, including those found on cleaning things, since there is no plausible explanation for why these non-pharmaceutical interventions could increase the risk of infection, so they explain that these results may be due to uncontrolled confounding or information biases. Therefore, the most appropriate interpretation of the results of this study is that they did not Serious

² Model 1: controlling for demographics (age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status), month of questionnaire completion, and vaccination status.

³ Model 2: as per model 1 plus controlling for money problems; working outside home; number of people in the household; having pets; pregnancy; number of comorbid conditions; history of a mental health problem; self-report steroids or immunosuppressant medication; statins; medications for diabetes; self-reported weight; smoking status; anxiety; depression; U.K. region; and month of questionnaire completion interacted with region.

⁴ Model 3: as per model 2 plus controlling for other NPIs and being in crowded places.

RIDs Reference and Country Setting and time covered Study characteristics Summary of key findings in relation to the outcome RoB VOCs assessed: None United States United States Between June and July 2020. implementation across five categories: Hand Hygiene, Disinfection, Social Distancing, PPE, and Symptom Screening. **Sample:** 24 LTCFs **Population:** 2,580 LTCF residents, among whom 1,004 (39%) were infected with COVID-19. **Funding:** public **Key Outcomes:** COVID-19 prevalence Site visits to LTCFs to evaluate infection prevention and control implementation, provide realtime feedback, and identify potential contributors to viral transmission. • The frequency per day cleaning high-touch areas in the facilities with higher prevalence had a mean of 4.5 and 3.9 in the one with lower prevalence. This difference was not statistically significant ($p= 0.64$) • Frequently training staff on cleaning product wet times was carried out in 18% of the facilities with higher prevalence and in 4% of those with lower prevalence. This difference was not statistically significant ($p= 0.48$) • Presence of records of the shared equipment cleaning schedule was found in 18% of facilities with higher prevalence and in 8% of those with lower prevalence. This difference was not statistically significant ($p= 0.44$) • There is a certified infection preventionist on staff in 45% of the facilities with higher prevalence and in 69% of the facilities with lower prevalence. This difference was not statistically significant ($p= 0.24$) • Overall cleaning and disinfection implementation was implemented in 45% of the facilities with higher prevalence and in 69% of the facilities with lower prevalence. This difference was not statistically significant ($p= 0.24$) Implementation of infection Prevention and Control Key Indicators Across Higher- and Lower-Prevalence LTCFs Higher Prevalence Group $(n = 11)$ Lower Prevalence Group $(n = 13)$ P value Frequency per day cleaning high-touch areas $Mean = 4.5$ $Mean = 3.9$ 0.64 Frequently training staff on cleaning product wet times 2 (18%) 4 (31%) 0.48 Presence of records of the shared equipment cleaning schedule 2 (18%) 1 (8%) 0.44 There is a certified IP on staff 5 (45%) 9 (69%) 0.24 Overall cleaning and disinfection implementation 27% 36% 0.44 Limitations: It is important to note that the sample sizes were small, making it more difficult to find statistically significant differences. Therefore, it cannot be concluded that cleaning and disinfection practices have no effect on the transmission of the risk of infection by the virus.

RIDs Reference and Country Setting and time covered Study characteristics Summary of key findings in relation to the outcome ROB Subtype HPAI H5N1 (Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N1). Nigeria and Egypt outbreak and subsequent assessments occurred during 2006–2008. LBMs was evaluated in Nigeria and Egypt through the administration of a 68-item biosecurity checklist. **Intervention**: Biosafety measures. Compliance with 68 biosafety measures is compared and its association with the risk of influenza infection was analyzed. Interventions and surfaces are not clearly detailed. **Sample**: 155 LBMs. **Population:** Influential Live Bird Market (popular markets with high traffic and turnout of poultry and also patronage), including 24 weekly and 51 daily in Southwest Nigeria. 80 LBMs from Alexandria, Beheira, Kafr El Sheik, Menofyia and Gharbia governorates were selected from Egypt. **Funding:** Public **Key outcomes**: Avian Influenza H5N1 status • Markets with routine disinfection showed better protection against HPAI H5N1 infection compared to those without such practices [OR, 0.13 (95% Cl, 0.5–0.33)]. • Other cleaning and disinfection practices did not appear to be significant in the multivariate analysis (proper cleaning and disinfection in the market, proper cleaning and disinfection at slaughtering points, disinfection facilities for trucks, disinfection of infrastructure and equipment, disinfection of premises, alternative use of disinfectants, cleaning of cages done routinely, disinfection of cages done routinely, disinfection of shared equipment, cleaning of equipment used for slaughtering, disinfection of equipment used for slaughtering). Limitations: It is important to note that compliance with biosafety measures was very low in both countries, which affects the analysis of the association between these measures and the risk of infection. On the other hand, concerns arise mainly from the lack of information on whether the cases and controls were adequately matched, as the authors indicate that when the laboratory result could not confirm the positivity of the test, the LBM was considered negative, which generated differential misclassification bias. The appropriateness of the exposure period is still unclear, which could influence the study's conclusions about the effectiveness of biosafety measures over time. The article focuses on the comparison between the LBM of Nigeria and that of Egypt, and the comparison between cases and controls is superficial. They indicate supplementary material where details of the comparison between cases and controls are found, but the material is not found on the page. Influenzalike illnesses (specific viruses not detailed) but SARS-Youssef et al., 2022 (10) Lebanon Residential settings in Lebanon during 2020–2021 flu season (from **Design**: Retrospective crosssectional observational study. Adherence to personal protective measures against COVID-19 (wearing face masks, hand hygiene, physical distancing, avoiding crowded places) • Lebanese adults who disinfected surfaces frequently or always were less likely to suffer from symptoms of influenza-like illnesses compared to those who did disinfection rarely, or did not [aOR 0.892 (95%CI, 0.632–0.911)] Moderate

Table 2: Summary of studies reporting on effectiveness of cleaning and disinfecting in deactivating/eliminating RIDs on surfaces assessed in real life community settings (n=10).

Last updated March 28th 2024

Table 3: Summary of studies reporting unintended consequences associated with the use of cleaning and disinfecting products and strategies to reduce the transmission of RIDs (n=8)

Last updated March 28th 2024

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Table 4: Summary of studies reporting on effectiveness of cleaning and disinfecting in deactivating/ eliminating SARS-CoV 2 on surfaces assessed in In vitro studies. (n=14)

Reference Date released Setting and funding Study characteristics Summary of key findings in relation to the outcome RoB • NaClO 1000 ppm was effective in the quantitative carrier test after 1 minute intervention. For complete reduction, surfaces were exposed for at least 5 min after intervention 1000 ppm, whereas 500 ppm NaClO required 10 min (SS, glass, and PP). Welch et al., 2021 (47) 12 Aug 2020 Iowa, United States; Public **Design**: In vitro experiment **Intervention**: Single application (by wipe) allowed to dry (<5 minutes) of: • Bleach (10 %; 0.6 % hypochlorite) ● Isopropanol (isopropyl alcohol - IPA 70%) $Commercial$ quaternary ammonium⁵ \bullet Hydrogen peroxide 3% Compared to control wipe: Phosphate-buffered saline **Population:** SARS CoV-2 (Seattle Washington strain MN985325) provided by Dr Stanley Perlman, University of Iowa). VeroE6 were provided by Dr Stanley Perlman. Cells were maintained in media. Virus titers were determined by median tissue culture infectious dose $(TCID₅₀)$ **Surface:** 3D printed material using Multi-Jet Fusion (MJF) technology and a powder-based polyamide-12 (PA12) material (HP 3D HR CB PA 12 - Hewlett-Packard, Palo Alto, CA), (used for VHA supplemental surgical face mask). **Key outcomes:** Log₁₀ reduction in infectious SARS-CoV-2 titer achieved. **VOCs assessed**: None • Single application of bleach reduced SARS-CoV-2 titer in >5.5 log in 3D printed material after 5 minutes of the intervention. No infectivity remained $P \leq 0.001$. • Single application of IPA reduced SARS-CoV-2 titer in 1.4 log in 3D printed material after 5 minutes of the intervention. No infectivity remained. • Single application of quaternary ammonium reduced SARS-CoV-2 titer in >5.5 log in 3D printed material after 5 minutes of the intervention. No infectivity remained $P < 0.001$. • Single application of hydrogen peroxide 3% achieved SARS-CoV-2 complete inactivation $P \le 0.0001$. Probably Low Criscuolo et al., 2021 (35) 30 Dec 2020 Italy; Public **Design**: In vitro experiment **Intervention**: • Gaseous Ozone 0.2 ppm application reduced SARS-CoV-2 titer in >99.9% in fleece, 96.8% in gauze, 93.3% in wood, 90% in glass and 82.2% in plastic, after 2 hours of the intervention. Probably Low

¹TX-10: VirusendTM was developed by Pritchard Spray Technologies, Colchester, UK ²0.077% w/w Alkyl dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride (C12-16) QAC (tested at 1:1.25 of supplied)

3Hand soap active ingredient: sodium C12-13 parethsulfate, cocamidopropyl betaine, sodium laureth sulfate, sodium benzoate, sodium salicylate, tetrasodium EDTA, PEG-18 glyceryl oleate, citric acid

⁴Dish soap active ingredient: C10-16 alkyldimethyl amine oxide, sodium laureth sulfate, methylisothiazolinone, PEG-24 copolymer, sodium laureth sulfate, sodium dodecylbenzenesulfonate, sodium hydroxide, sodium chloride. ⁵Sani-Cloth germicidal disposable wipe AF3; n-Alkyl [68% C12, 32% C14] dimethyl ethyl benzyl ammonium chlorides – 0.14%; n-Alkyl [60% C14, 30% C12, 5% C18] dimethyl benzyl ammonium chlorides – 0.14% 6 Neat 1%-5% Tetrasodium EDTA (CAS 13235-36-4); 0.1%-1% quaternary ammonium compounds, C12-18-alkyl[(ethyl phenyl)methyl]dimethyl (CAS 68956-79-6); 0.1%-1% quaternary ammonium compounds, C12-14-alkyl[(ethyl phenyl)methyl]d chlorides (CAS 85409-23-0)

⁷1/3 cup bleach in 1 gallon of hard water 5%–10% Sodium hypochlorite (CAS 7681-52-9)

⁸4 oz per gallon hard water 0.39% Hydrogen peroxide (CAS 7722-84-1)

⁹ Neat 0.200% Oxychlorine compounds; 0.125% n-alkyl dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride (CAS 68391-01-5); 0.125% n-alkyl dimethyl ethyl benzyl ammonium chloride (CAS 85409-23-0)

¹⁰ QAC Alkyl (50% C14, 40% C12, 10% C16) dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride. $(0.19\% \text{ w/w})$

¹¹ Citric acid $(2.4\% \text{ w/w})$

¹² Ethanol (50% w/w)/ QAC Alkyl (50% C14, 40% C12, 10% C16) dimethyl benzyl ammonium saccharinate. (0.082% w/w)

¹³ QAC Alkyl (67% C12, 25% C14, 7% C16, 1% C8-C10-C18) dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride; Alkyl (50% C14, 40% C12, 10% C16) dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride. (0.092% w/w)

¹⁴ BTC 8358+Bardac 2080 (0.08%) 1:28 of product in 400 ppm AOAC

¹⁵ Polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA) microcapsules developed with an active agent (hydrogen peroxide) encapsulated. PMMA with a weight average (M_w) of 550,000 g/mol (based on GPC analysis) and poly(vinyl alcohol) (PVA, 98 Aesar (Massachusetts, EUA). Hydrogen peroxide (30 wt %) in a water solution was purchased from Scharlab (Barcelona, Spain). The BAYPRET NANO-PU solution (TANATEX Chemicals) was used as the subtract binder.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Detailed search strategy

Last updated 03 Feb 2024

Databases searched:

- · PubMed <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>
- · CINAHL
- · Science Direct

LES 18.1 **Databases searched:**

- · PubMed <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>
- · iCITE (searches Research Square, MedRxiv, arXiv, bioRxiv, Preprints.org, ChemRxiv , Peer Review (PubMed), and Qeios[\)](https://icite.od.nih.gov/covid19/search/) <https://icite.od.nih.gov/covid19/search/>
- · Embase via OVID Embase 1996 to 2022 December 05
- · Compede[x](https://www.engineeringvillage.com/) <https://www.engineeringvillage.com/>
- · Web of Science [-](https://www.webofscience.com/wos/woscc/basic-search) <https://www.webofscience.com/wos/woscc/basic-search>

Search Limits: English language, Human, searched from 01/01/2020.

Appendix 2: Studies excluded at the last stages of reviewing.

Appendix 3: Data extraction form

Appendix 4: Approach to critical appraisal

We appraise the RoB of the individual non-randomized studies using an adapted version of [ROBINS-I.](https://methods.cochrane.org/methods-cochrane/robins-i-tool) This tool classifies the Risk of Bias of a study as Low, Moderate, Serious, Critical, or No Information. Low Risk of Bias indicates High Quality, and Critical Risk of Bias indicates Very Low (insufficient) Quality. ROBINS-I appraises 7 bias domains and judges each study against an ideal reference randomized controlled trial. To improve the utility of ROBINS-I for assessing studies reporting cleaning and disinfecting products/strategies, we have focused on study characteristics that introduce bias specifically for these interventions. Once a study has met one criterion that makes it "critical" risk of bias, it will be dropped from further risk of bias assessment (exception: if limited data available for an outcome). An overall judgment of "serious" or "critical" is given when the study is judged to be at serious or critical risk of bias in at least one domain or "serious" in 3 separate ROBINS-I domains.

We appraise the methodological quality of the individual analytical cross-sectional studies using an JBI tool.

Critical appraisal checklist for cross-sectional studies

We appraise the methodological quality of the individual case-control studies using an JBI tool.

Critical appraisal tool for case-control studies

We appraise the RoB of the In vitro studies using an adapted version of [OHAT RoB Tool](https://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/ntp/ohat/pubs/riskofbiastool_508.pdf) for Human and Animal Studies. This tool classifies the Risk of Bias as Definitely Low, Probably Low, Probably High or Definitely High. Definitely Low Risk of Bias indicates High Quality, and Definitely High Risk of Bias indicates Very Low (insufficient) Quality. OHAT RoB appraises 6 domains with 11 questions. To improve the utility of OHAT for assessing In Vitro studies reporting cleaning and disinfecting products/strategies, we have focused on study characteristics that introduce bias [specifically](https://www.epa.gov/) for these interventions in the In Vitro context. Once a study has met one criterion that makes it "Definitely High" risk of bias, it will be dropped from further risk of bias assessment (exception: if limited data available for an outcome).

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Appendix 5: Glossary

