

COVID-19: Preventative Measures

Cleaning and Disinfecting Reusable Bags

Current evidence suggests that novel coronavirus may remain viable for hours or days on a variety of surfaces. Cleaning followed by disinfection is recommended by the CDC as a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in households and community settings.

At this time, there is no link between reusable bags and COVID-19.

Reusable bags are not considered a significant risk factor in the spread of COVID-19 and as such do not need to be banned from stores.

Cleaning and disinfecting plastic and nylon bags

- Clean inside and outside of the bag with soapy water and rinse.
- Spray or wipe down the bags inside and out with diluted bleach solution (see below) or recommended disinfectant.
- Allow bags to air dry completely before storing and using.
- CDC recommends diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, and compounds on the EPA-recommended list, found here: go.ncsu.edu/epacovid-19

Cleaning cloth bags

- Wash in warm water with normal laundry detergent.
- Dry on the warmest setting possible.
- See CDC guidelines on laundry go.ncsu.edu/cdclaundry

Diluting bleach

- Follow manufacturer's label instructions for application and proper ventilation.
- Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water **OR**
 - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
- Use containers of bleach that have been open no longer than 30 days, as bleach can break down over time.

It is always a good practice to clean and disinfect shopping bags after each use, and to pay extra attention to bags used to carry raw animal products.

For more information, visit:

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov

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<http://go.ncsu.edu/covid-19>

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EXTENSION