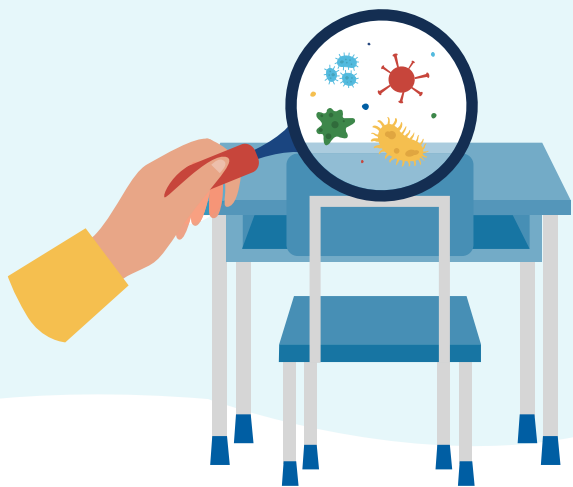


# Infectious Diseases and Public Health Resources



## Help prevent the spread of infectious diseases in schools through a variety of strategies for everyday operations.

Kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) schools are an important part of the infrastructure of communities as they provide safe, supportive learning environments for students and children and offer critical services that help to mitigate health disparities. The ability for schools to remain open and practice in-person instruction is critical both for students' learning and education, as well as for the opportunities they provide for youth health, well-being, and development. Throughout the year, however, schools can face challenges to sustaining safe and healthy in-person learning due to potential outbreaks of infectious diseases like COVID-19, influenza (flu), and others.

While infectious disease outbreaks and other public health concerns may be unpredictable, K-12 schools should put in place a core set of prevention strategies as part of their normal operations. These include teaching and reinforcing proper hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting surfaces, optimizing ventilation and maintaining improvements to indoor air quality, promoting equitable access to vaccinations, and encouraging students and staff to stay home when they are sick. School and district administrators should also work with local health officials to consider other local conditions and factors when deciding to implement prevention strategies.

There are a variety of actions schools can take every day to help prevent the spread of infectious diseases, including:



## Hand Hygiene

One of the most important steps to keep staff and children in schools healthy is ensuring proper hygiene, including cleaning hands to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Schools should encourage hand hygiene among students and staff through education, scheduled time for handwashing, and by providing appropriate supplies. Actions include monitoring handwashing and promoting these behaviors, especially during key times in the day such as before and after eating, and after using the restroom. Schools should also teach and reinforce covering coughs and sneezes to help keep individuals from getting and spreading infectious diseases. Resources include:

- [Clean Hands and Spaces: Web-Based Training](#): This training for educators, administrators, and school staff consists of four modules designed to equip school communities with knowledge and skills to encourage good hygiene practices.
- [Hand Hygiene at School](#): This webpage highlights the importance of hand hygiene and outlines ways school personnel can promote hand hygiene in school to keep staff and children healthy.
- [Handwashing in Communities: Health Promotion Materials](#): This webpage features printable posters that can help raise awareness about handwashing in highly visible public areas, such as school hallways and restrooms.
- [When and How to Wash Your Hands](#): This webpage provides information on how germs spread and guidance on when and how to wash your hands to prevent the spread of infections.





## Cleaning and Disinfecting

Cleaning and disinfecting are part of a broad approach to preventing infectious diseases in schools by lowering the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a safe level. Cleaning removes germs, dirt, and impurities, whereas disinfecting kills germs by using chemicals. Schools should follow their standard procedures for routine cleaning and disinfecting, including daily sanitizing of surfaces and objects that are touched often, such as desks, door and faucet handles, computer keyboards, and other hands-on learning items. Resources include:

- [Commit to Clean: Classroom Checklist](#): This checklist is designed to help with routine school cleaning to keep classrooms and shared spaces clean for the well-being of students and staff.
- [Environmental NPIs: Surface Cleaning](#): This webpage features information on environmental nonpharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) like routine surface cleaning that help to eliminate the flu virus from frequently touched surfaces and objects in schools and other settings.
- [How To Clean and Disinfect Schools To Help Slow the Spread of Flu](#): This webpage offers tips on how to clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces and objects, how to use cleaning products safely, and how to handle waste properly to slow the spread of flu.



## Ventilation

Good ventilation can reduce the number of virus particles in the air and, along with other preventive actions, can reduce the likelihood of spreading disease. Schools should be aware of air quality and ventilation measures and should optimize ventilation and maintain improvements to indoor air quality to reduce the risk of germs and contaminants spreading through the air. Resources include:

- [Creating Healthy Indoor Air Quality in Schools](#): This webpage includes resources for schools to promote a safe, healthy learning environment by improving indoor air quality and breathability.
- [Healthy Indoor Environments in Schools During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond](#): This webpage contains links to resources and guidance from federal agencies about indoor air considerations for schools, as well as resources to help create, maintain, and improve healthy learning environments beyond the pandemic.
- [Interactive School Ventilation Tool](#): This interactive tool can be used to see how particle levels change as you adjust ventilation settings in your school, and how to decrease particle levels.
- [Ventilation in Schools and Childcare Programs](#): This webpage highlights ways you can improve ventilation in your school, through strategies such as opening windows, using portable air cleaners, and improving building-wide filtration.



## General Guidance

- [Guidance for School Administrators to Help Reduce the Spread of Seasonal Influenza in K-12 Schools](#): This webpage provides guidance to help reduce the spread of seasonal flu among students and staff in K-12 schools.
- [Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning](#): This updated version of COVID-19 guidance for school administrators outlines strategies for K-12 schools to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and maintain safe operations.
- [Seasonal Flu: Information for Schools & Childcare Providers](#): This webpage provides information, materials, and tools to help reduce the spread of seasonal flu among students and staff in K-12 schools and also links to resources on common flu topics for school administrators, school staff, and parents.

Sources: [CDC.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) | [CDC.gov/flu](https://www.cdc.gov/flu) | [CDC.gov/handwashing](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing) | [CDC.gov/ventilation](https://www.cdc.gov/ventilation)

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