



## Disinfecting • Sanitizing • Cleaning

### Knowing the Difference Can Make All the Difference

#### CLEANING

**Cleaning physically removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects.**

This does not necessarily *kill* germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and helps reduce the risk of spreading infection.

#### SANITIZING

**Sanitizing chemically lowers the number of bacteria on surfaces or objects to a safe level.** Sanitizers (on non-food contact surfaces) reduce 99.9% of *bacteria* listed on the product label.

#### DISINFECTING

**Disinfecting kills all microbes listed on the product label.** Killing germs on a surface (especially in high-touch areas) after cleaning further reduces the risk of spreading infection. Disinfectants are widely used in hospitals. Most quat-based disinfectants are “one-step” products. They clean and disinfect in one operation.

#### What is the difference between a “limited disinfectant”, “general disinfectant” and “hospital disinfectant”?

- Limited:** The disinfectant is registered for use against a specific major group of organisms (gram-negative or gram-positive bacteria). Efficacy has been demonstrated in laboratory tests against either *Salmonella choleraesuis* or *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria. “Limited Disinfectant” is displayed on the front panel of the label.
- General:** This group of disinfectants is registered for use against both gram-negative and gram-positive bacteria. Efficacy is demonstrated against both *Salmonella choleraesuis* and *Staphylococcus aureus*. These products are NOT intended for use in medical settings.
- Hospital:** This group of disinfectants is registered for use in hospitals, clinics, dental offices, and other medical-related facilities, as well as in daycare centers, nursing homes, and schools.

OVER



### How do I know which is best for school use?

Be sure those who specify janitorial products for schools purchase disinfectants registered for use in medical settings (hospital disinfectants), especially when there is a need to control rapidly-spreading illness. These products are broad-spectrum disinfectants with efficacy against *Salmonella choleraesuis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. There are approximately 1,200 disinfectants that meet these requirements. Labels will indicate the pathogens the product will control and will have directions for use in a medical setting prominently shown on the label.

For Hospitals, Medical and Dental Offices, Nursing Homes and other Medical Facilities: According to the AOAC Use-Dilution Test, **Disinfectant Cleaner** is an effective hospital disinfectant in the presence of 5% organic serum against the following gram negative and gram positive organisms: *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Salmonella enterica*, *Acinetobacter baumannii*, *Corynebacterium ammoniagenes*, *Enterobacter aerogenes*, *Enterococcus faecalis* – Vancomycin resistant, *Escherichia coli*, ESBL *Escherichia coli* – (Extended spectrum beta-lactamase producing *E. coli*), *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, *Pseudomonas cepacia*, *Salmonella schottmuelleri*, *Serratia marcescens*, *Shigella dysenteriae*, *Staphylococcus aureus* Methicillin-Resistant (MRSA), *Staphylococcus aureus* – Vancomycin Intermediate Resistant – (VISA) and *Streptococcus faecalis*.



For Schools, Public Rest Rooms, Athletic Facilities, Food Processing Plants, Food Storage Areas, Kitchens, Restaurants, Bars, Transportation Terminals, Hotels, Motels and Other Non-Medical Institutional and Industrial Uses. According to the AOAC Use- Dilution Test, **Disinfectant Cleaner** is an effective broad spectrum general disinfectant in the presence of 5% organic serum against the following organisms: *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Salmonella enterica*, *Brevibacterium ammoniagenes*, *Enterobacter aerogenes*, *Escherichia coli*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, *Salmonella schottmuelleri*, *Serratia marcescens*, *Shigella dysenteriae* and *Streptococcus faecalis*.

Adapted from <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/school/cleaning.htm> and <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/whats-difference-between-products-disinfect-sanitize-and-clean-surfaces>



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