

This information is taken from the BBC website and using their information source, National Institute of Health.

The virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is stable for several hours to days in aerosols and on surfaces, according to a new study from National Institutes of Health, CDC, UCLA and Princeton University scientists in *The New England Journal of Medicine*. The scientists found that severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) was detectable in aerosols for up to three hours, up to four hours on copper, up to 24 hours on cardboard and up to two to three days on plastic and stainless steel. The results provide key information about the stability of SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19 disease, and suggests that people may acquire the virus through the air and after touching contaminated objects.

The [coronavirus](#) that causes COVID-19 mainly spreads from person to person. When someone who is infected [coughs](#) or sneezes, they send droplets containing the virus into the air and can live for three hours in the air. A healthy person can then [breathe](#) in those droplets. You can also catch the virus if you touch a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touch your [mouth](#), nose, or [eyes](#).

[Coronavirus: What you Need to Know](#)

The [coronavirus](#) can live for hours to days on surfaces like countertops and doorknobs. How long it survives depends on the material the surface is made from.

Here's a guide to how long coronaviruses -- the family of viruses that includes the one that causes COVID-19 -- can live on some of the surfaces you probably touch on a daily basis. Keep in mind that researchers still have a lot to learn about the new coronavirus that causes COVID-19. For example, they don't know whether exposure to heat, cold, or sunlight affects how long it lives on surfaces.

Metal

Examples: doorknobs, jewellery, silverware

5 days

Wood

Examples: furniture, decking

4 days

Plastics

Examples: packaging like milk containers and detergent bottles, bus seats, backpacks, lift buttons

2 to 3 days

Stainless steel

Examples: refrigerators, pots and pans, sinks, some [water](#) bottles

2 to 3 days

Cardboard

Examples: shipping boxes

24 hours

Copper

Examples: coins, kettles, cookware

4 hours

Aluminium

Examples: drink cans, tinfoil, water bottles
2 to 8 hours

Glass

Examples: drinking glasses, measuring cups, mirrors, windows
Up to 5 days

Ceramics

Examples: dishes, pottery, mugs
5 days

Paper

The length of time varies. Some strains of coronavirus live for only a few minutes on paper, while others live for up to 5 days.

Food

Coronavirus doesn't seem to spread through exposure to food.

Water

Coronavirus hasn't been found in drinking water. If it does get into the water supply, your local water treatment plant filters and disinfects the water, which should kill any germs.

Coronaviruses can live on a variety of other surfaces, like fabrics and countertops.

[Coronavirus Transmission: What You Need to Know](#)

What You Can Do

To reduce your chance of catching or spreading coronavirus, clean and disinfect all surfaces and objects in your home and office every day. This includes:

- Countertops
- Tables
- Doorknobs
- Bathroom fixtures
- Phones
- Keyboards
- Remote controls
- Toilets

Use a household cleaning spray or wipe. If the surfaces are dirty, clean them first with soap and water and then disinfect them.

Keep surfaces clean, even if everyone in your house is healthy. People who are infected may not show symptoms, but they can still shed the virus onto surfaces.