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Knowing the Difference

It is important to know the difference between cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing.

Cleaning is the act of removing dirt, germs, and other impurities on surfaces. This process usually involves water, soap, and some type of cleaner. It is important to know that cleaning does not kill germs, but by removing them, it can reduce the spreading of infection.

Disinfecting is the process of using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces. This method generally requires the solvent to remain on surfaces for a specified amount of time (i.e.- 3 – 5 minutes or more). The required time is printed on the label, so it is necessary to read before using. Disinfecting also reduces the spread of infection.

Sanitizing is the process of making surfaces sanitary by way of cleaning, disinfecting, and/or both. This approach eliminates bacteria by physical method (i.e.- wearing disposable gloves, discarding trash correctly) or chemical method (i.e. – using an “All Purpose Cleaner”).

