

Coronavirus Can Survive on Surfaces and Air for Hours, Says New Study

A new study published in the New England Journal of Medicine has found that coronavirus can survive on surfaces and in the air. A joint effort from scientists at the Centers for Disease Control, National Institutes of Health, University of California Los Angeles, and Princeton University, these findings have added another level of tension to an already fraught situation. According to the study, COVID-19 was detected on plastic and stainless steel surfaces for two to three days and cardboard for up to 24 hours. The study compared COVID-19 (the technical name for the virus is SARS-CoV-2) with the SARS virus from 2002-2003 and suggested that the coronavirus pandemic has been greater due to asymptomatic people transmitting the virus.

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Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 to persons from surfaces contaminated with the virus has not been documented. Transmission of coronavirus occurs much more commonly through respiratory droplets than through fomites. Current evidence suggests that SARS-CoV-2 may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in households and community settings. It is unknown how long the air inside a room occupied by

someone with confirmed COVID-19 remains potentially infectious.”

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The study found that SARS-CoV-2 remains infectious in airborne droplets for at least three hours. The majority of safety efforts have concentrated on preventing the spread of the virus through airborne methods like coughing and sneezing. As more information on the pandemic emerges, it seems that people should err on the side of being safe, rather than sorry.

Sources:

- *Coronavirus can survive on surfaces and in air for hours, study says – Japan Times*
- *Aerosol and Surface Stability of SARS-CoV-2 as Compared with SARS-CoV-1 – The New England Journal of Medicine*
- *Aerosol and Surface Stability of SARS-CoV-2 as Compared with SARS-CoV-1*
- *How long does the coronavirus live on surfaces? – USA Today*