



CLEANING FOR HEALTH

Cold & Flu Season 2023-2024 Update

While this year’s cold and flu season is not expected to reach the heightened levels of last year’s so-called “triple-demic”—when multiple respiratory viruses were spreading at the same time—recent reports suggest there is still cause for concern. According to the CDC, flu activity is rising in most parts of the country, while RSV infections are spiking in specific regions, filling hospital rooms in Georgia, Texas and other states. Lurking in the background is a new dominant COVID-19 variant that is said to be highly contagious. Given these emerging trends, facility and operations managers should scale up time and resources devoted to touch point cleaning and disinfecting.

- > *There have been at least 1.2 million illnesses and 12,000 hospitalizations due to the flu this season, as of November 27, according to the CDC.*¹
- > *A new COVID-19 variant helped push weekly hospitalizations up by 18,119 in mid-November, adding strain to already burdened hospital systems.*³
- > *RSV is the #1 cause of hospitalizations among U.S. infants. The illness also impacts adults and results in as many as 10,000 deaths per year among seniors.*²
- > *Poor health costs US employers \$530 billion and 1.4 billion workdays of absence and impaired performance.*⁴

Surface Transmission and Disease Spread

Germs are most often spread by hands through person-to-person contact. Contaminated hands can transfer viruses up to five more surfaces. Various studies show that bacteria, fungi and viruses can live on surfaces for days, months, and even some up to a year.⁵

Common pathogens that cause infections and live on surfaces include:⁵

Common Cold Viruses 24 Hours	Flu 24 - 48 Hours	Salmonella 1 - 4 Hours
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Up to 6 Hours	E.coli Hours to a Day	Staphylococcus Aureus (“Staph”) Days to Weeks
Norovirus Days to Weeks	MRSA Days to Weeks	C.difficile 5 Months

Cleaning for Health: The KBS Perspective

Proper cleaning and disinfection is essential to healthy facility operations. Regular surface cleaning mitigates the spread of illness causing germs. Whether corporate campus, retail location, logistics center or school campus, the people who work, shop and learn in your buildings demand a safe, healthy environment. With flu and RSV cases rising, and COVID looming in the background, the 2023-24 could be worse than anticipated. This is no time to reduce cleaning resources and protocols or pull back on disinfection services.

Creating healthy facility operations requires professional program design and expert execution. With over 50 years of experience, KBS is a trusted partner to industry leaders. Consult KBS to learn more about best practices to keep your facilities safe and your building occupants healthy.

¹ [Weekly U.S. Influenza Surveillance Report](#)

³ [COVID Data Tracker](#)

⁵ [How Long Do Nosocomial Pathogens Persist on Inanimate Surfaces? A Systematic Review](#)

² [RSV is straining some hospitals, and US officials are releasing more shots for newborns](#)

⁴ [Poor Health Costs US Employers \\$530 Billion and 1.4 Billion Work Days of Absence and Impaired Performance According to IBI](#)