



Disinfecting clothes

The current medical crisis has encouraged us to rethink the cleanliness routine in our everyday lives. Health organisations around the world, including the World Health Organization (WHO), have been highlighting the importance of maintaining social distancing, frequent hand washing and disinfecting everyday items such as cutlery and clothes for quite some time now.

Even though it is unclear how long the virus can survive on clothing items, experts recommend taking extra precaution in 'cleaning clothes,' especially when living with a patient suffering from the infectious disease.

Disinfection is very important, when it comes to 'killing' the virus. On the other hand, regular cleaning mechanisms only help in removing dirt and grime and lower the rate of the spread, but it does not kill

the virus completely.

To ensure elimination, we must resort to disinfection.

The normal process before COVID-19 used to be accumulation of all clothes in one place, typically a laundry basket, and then washing them off all together at a convenient time.

But the current situation depicts a different approach to cleaning clothes. We must soak the (probable) infected clothes in a separate basket, for e.g., the clothes that we wear when outside the house or when we come close to an infected person. These clothes need to be dipped in detergents, especially the ones that have a small percentage of bleach in it.

We can use regular detergents and add a tiny amount of bleach in it and soak it for some time, before rinsing the mixture away. Bleach must be used with adequate

caution, as it is harmful to our skin and the clothes that we wear.

Another important recommendation by experts is to choose the warmest available water setting during the washing process. WHO recommends a temperature setting between 60 and 90 degrees Celsius. However, it must also be remembered that hot water must be used with caution as it can shrink certain clothing items and damage both the finger tips and clothes. It is therefore wise to read the care labels before attempting such a procedure. The disinfected and washed clothes need to be dried completely and separately from other clothes.

The laundry baskets used to store the clothes must also be disinfected time and again.

It is ideal to wear gloves when doing the laundry. Experts suggest a separate

washing of hands with warm water and soap immediately after removing the gloves.

All these procedures are used as precautionary measures to stop the spread of the virus, but ultimately, what really matters is the immunity levels in our bodies. If we can somehow keep the immunity levels high, the virus will not be able to take-over, as our bodies will fight back and not succumb to the virulent disease.

So, the way-out have always been there. The prevention mechanisms have been widely publicised. Irrespective of all that, what matters at the end is how well we follow a healthy lifestyle and keep our immunity boosted.

By MMC

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