



NEWS RELEASE

American Cleaning Institute Response to Study on Household Use of Bleach

4/3/2015

Washington, D.C. - April 3, 2015 - The American Cleaning Institute (ACI) released the following statement in response to a study in the journal Occupational & Environmental Medicine that attacks the use of bleach in the home:

"The authors of the study make overly broad claims linking the use of bleach in the home to higher childhood infection rates. The fact is, this study provides no evidence that household bleach use is leading to infections in children.

"The associations described were based on observational surveys of heads of households, and as the researchers themselves admit, "no definitive conclusions can be drawn about cause-and-effect."

"Since there was no data presented on the children's actual exposure to bleach - nor any diagnoses of actual diseases - the authors are merely speculating.

"Further, the authors completely fail to acknowledge the benefits of household bleach when it is properly used for cleaning, disinfecting and laundering.

"Studies have shown that "when cleaning is supplemented with sodium hypochlorite bleach, there is a significant reduction in the number of bacteria on contaminated sites, such as counter tops and faucet or refrigerator handles. Sodium hypochlorite bleach has been shown to be effective at inactivating a wide range of pathogenic bacteria."

[Aiello, Larson, and Sedlak, summarizing several studies* in **Against Disease: The Impact of Hygiene and Cleanliness on Health**, 2007, p. 97.]

"Of course, it is of paramount importance that bleach be used according to the product directions and that it not be mixed with other cleaning products. Bleach needs to be safely stored and secured out of sight and out of reach of children. Proper ventilation is important when cleaning or disinfecting with bleach products.

"Bleach can be used to disinfect and sanitize laundry as well as kitchen, bathroom and other surfaces around the home. Bleach products provide a host of health benefits and are a trusted guard against seasonal flu outbreaks and episodes of foodborne illness.

"Daycare centers, hospitals, restaurants and public facilities of all kinds rely upon the disinfectant qualities of bleach to keep their facilities safe from harmful germs. As a reminder, products that claim to kill germs must meet efficacy requirements and guidelines established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and must be registered with EPA and carry an EPA registration number on their label.

"Consumers can continue to rely on bleach products as they have for decades. The key, as always, is to use them safely, properly, and as directed."

ACI Bleach Fact Sheet:

http://www.cleaninginstitute.org/clean_living/cleaning_product_facts_bleach.aspx

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*P. Rusin et al, Reduction of Fecal Coliform, Coliform and Heterotrophic Plate Count Bacteria in the Household Kitchen and Bathroom by Disinfection with Hypochlorite Cleaners," J Appl Micro 85 (1998): 819-828. T. A. Cogan et al, "The Effectiveness of Hygiene Procedures for Prevention of Cross Contamination from Chicken Carcasses in the Domestic Kitchen," Lett Appl Microbiol 29 (1999): 354-358. P. Rusin, et al, "Reduction of Faecal Coliform, Coliform and Heterotrophic Plate Count Bacteria in the Household Kitchen and Bathroom by Disinfection with Hypochlorite Cleaners," J Appl Microbiol 85 (1998): 819-828. C. B. Hall et al, "Modes of Transmission of Respiratory Syncytial Virus," J Pediatr 99 (1981): 100-103. C. Parnes, "Efficacy of Sodium Hypochlorite Bleach and 'Alternative' Products in Preventing Transfer of Bacteria To and From Inanimate Surfaces," Environ Health (1997), January/February: 14-20. W. A. Rutala et al, "Stability and Bactericidal Activity of Chlorine Solutions," Infect Contr Hosp Epidemiol 19(5) (1998): 323-327. S. F. Bloomfield et al, "Comparative Testing of Disinfectant and Antiseptic Products Using Proposed European Suspension Testing Methods," Lett Appl Microbiol 13 (1991): 233-237. D. Berman et al, "Inactivation of Particle-Associated Coliforms by Chlorine and Monochloramine," Appl Environ Microbiol 54 (1988): 507-512. P. Skaliy et al, "Laboratory Studies of Disinfectants Against Legionella Pneumophila," Appl Environ Microbiol 40 (1980): 697-700.

The American Cleaning Institute® (ACI) is the Home of the U.S. Cleaning Products Industry® and represents the \$30 billion U.S. cleaning products market. ACI members include the formulators of soaps, detergents, and general cleaning products used in household, commercial, industrial and institutional settings; companies that supply ingredients and finished packaging for these products; and oleochemical producers. ACI (www.cleaninginstitute.org) and its members are dedicated to improving health and the quality of life through sustainable cleaning products and practices.

Contact: Brian Sansoni, American Cleaning Institute, 202.662.2517 or bsansoni@cleaninginstitute.org