Aftermath®
Specialists in Trauma Cleaning & Biohazard Removal

HOW LONG CAN DISEASES SURVIVE ON A SURFACE?

Many communicable diseases can survive outside the body for an extended period of time, which is why handwashing is so important. Conditions that may linger on household surfaces after an outbreak include:

Measles: 2 Hours

In recent years, in part due to vaccine hesitancy, measles outbreaks have become more prevalent in the US. 2016 saw only 86 cases, but the year 2018 saw 372 cases; and so far in 2019, from January to April 19, the US has seen a whopping 626 measles cases.

H1N1 (Swine Flu): 2 to 8 hours

In August 2010, the World Health Organization called swine flu a global pandemic. It reminded us how quickly disease can spread in a connected world and how many millions of lives are impacted following an outbreak.

Norovirus: days or weeks

Each year, norovirus affects 20 million people in the United States and causes upwards of 800 deaths. Most of these deaths are either children or the elderly.

MRSA: days or weeks

A form of antibiotic-resistant staph infection, MRSA begins as small bumps and grows into deep, painful abscesses in the skin. MRSA is highly contagious and potentially life-threatening.

Hepatitis: up to 3 weeks

While all 5 types of hepatitis vary, they all contribute to liver disease. Hepatitis C alone affects an estimated 2.7 million people in the US, and most are unaware that they carry the virus.

C. diff: 5 months

C. diff is a bacterium that causes inflammation of the colon, affecting 500,000 people each year in the US. It has high potential for fatality, is extremely contagious, and survives on household surfaces for a long time.