



# Keeping Gyms Clean & Healthy

*Cleaning with “soap or detergent... removes most types of harmful germs (like viruses, bacteria, parasites, or fungi)”.* – Centers for Disease Control



## Gym patrons should not use disinfectant sprays or wipes

- As commonly used in gyms, disinfectants can harm human health, cost up to hundreds of dollars per month, and do not provide a health benefit
  - Quaternary Ammonium Compounds, common disinfectants, are linked to [dermal, respiratory, immune, reproductive, and developmental harms](#)
- To be effective, disinfectants must be applied to a clean surface and left wet for minutes
  - A several-minute-long wait between spraying and wiping down equipment is unlikely in gyms
- The overuse of disinfectants can contribute to antimicrobial resistance



## Gym patrons should use healthier cleaning products

- [Soap & water solution](#)
- Safer Choice certified [cleaning products](#)

## Disinfection should be done by trained staff

- Gyms should follow the [Centers for Disease Control guidelines](#)
- Disinfect when there is a risk for disease transmission (e.g., after cleaning-up vomit, blood, etc.)
- Staff should follow the manufacturer’s directions and use personal protective equipment when recommended
- If disinfection is necessary use [safer active ingredients](#) such as Design for the Environment (DfE) certified [safer disinfectants](#)

**40,000 gyms in the US could be healthier!**



## Avoid Products with Quaternary Ammonium Compounds (QACs) including

- benzalkonium chloride
- n-alkyl (C12-18) didecyl dimethyl ammonium chloride
- dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride
- others often ending with “nium chloride” or similar

Bactericidal • Virucidal • Fungicidal • Mildewcidal •  
Mildewstatic • Deodorizer

**ACTIVE INGREDIENTS:**

Didecyl dimethyl ammonium chloride.....8.704%  
n-Alkyl (50% C14, 40% C12, 10% C16)  
dimethyl benzyl ammonium chloride .....8.190%

**OTHER INGREDIENTS:**.....83.106%  
**TOTAL:**.....100.000%

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

**DANGER**

## References

Centers for Disease Control: When and how to clean and disinfect a facility:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/hygiene/cleaning/facility.html>

Safer Choice certified cleaning products:  
<https://www.epa.gov/saferchoice/products>

Design for the Environment certified disinfectants  
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-labels/dfe-certified-disinfectants>

Safer disinfectant ingredients identified by the Toxics Use Reduction Institute:  
[https://www.turi.org/TURI\\_Publications/TURI\\_Chemical\\_Fact\\_Sheets/Quaternary\\_Ammonium\\_Compounds\\_Fact\\_Sheet/Alternatives](https://www.turi.org/TURI_Publications/TURI_Chemical_Fact_Sheets/Quaternary_Ammonium_Compounds_Fact_Sheet/Alternatives)

Quaternary ammonium compounds: A chemical class of emerging concern  
<https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acs.est.2c08244>

