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!

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

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