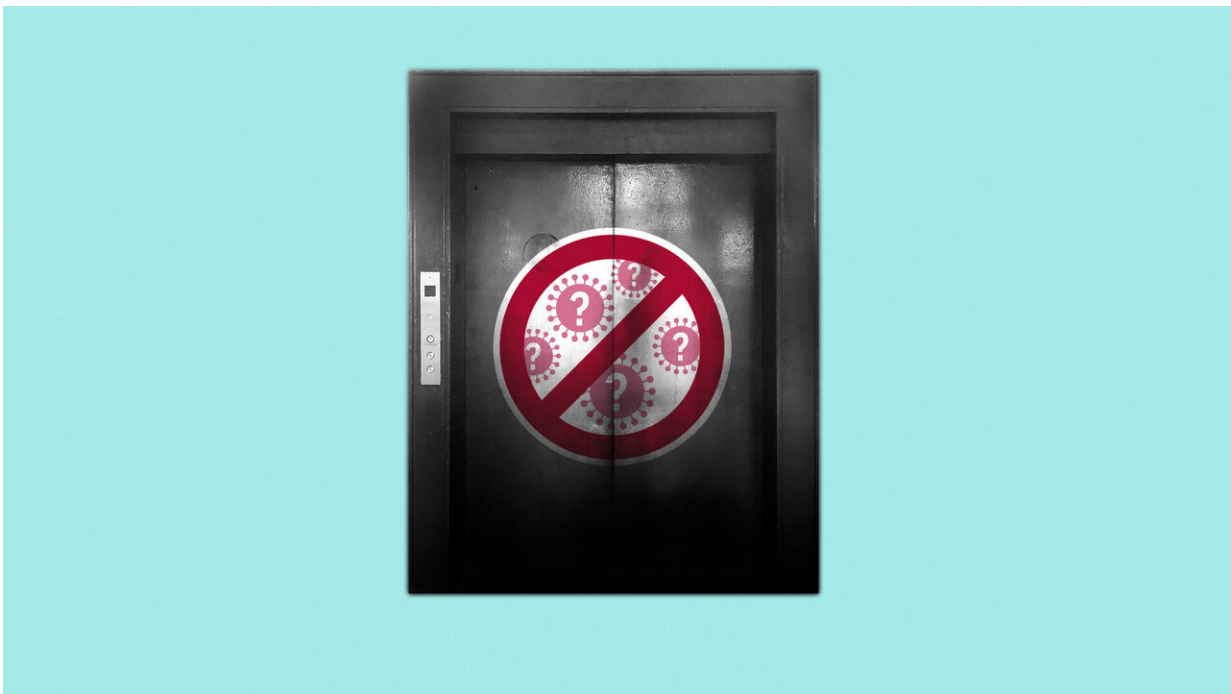


# Do "self-cleaning" elevator buttons really work?

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Do "self-cleaning" elevator buttons really work? AP Illustration/Peter Hamlin

Do "self-cleaning" elevator buttons really work?

Without rigorous independent studies, experts say it's hard to verify claims of "[self-cleaning](#)" or "antiviral" surfaces that have popped up during the pandemic.

But they also say you shouldn't worry too much about how well such features really work.

COVID-19 is an airborne disease. Research suggests it would be difficult to catch the [virus](#) from surfaces like an elevator button.

"You get it through what you breathe, not through what you touch," said Emanuel Goldman, who studies viruses at Rutgers University.

Studies showing the virus can survive several hours on plastic or [metal surfaces](#) do not mimic real-life conditions, said Dr. Dean Winslow, an infectious disease specialist at Stanford Health Care.

Companies are selling antibacterial and antiviral elevator button or door handle covers. But building or office managers looking to protect employees or tenants would be better off buying hand-sanitizing stations instead, Winslow said.

And anyone wanting to avoid the virus should continue taking regular public health precautions: mask-wearing, [social distancing](#) and avoiding indoor events, bars, dining and gyms.

Routine hand washing is also recommended, whether there's a pandemic or not, Goldman said.

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