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September 4, 2020

Caitlin Howell shared her expertise with [Business Insider](#) for an article about coronavirus precautions. [Business Insider India](#) ran a portion of the story. The assistant professor of chemical and biological engineering said the chance of catching COVID-19 from frozen food is slim. "It is possible, but the virus is not very stable outside the human body. Freezing or refrigerating the virus can help to extend the period of time that it stays infectious, which is why we think that outbreaks at meatpacking plants were occurring so frequently, but transmission via surfaces still appears to be rare — even when those surfaces are frozen or refrigerated." The coronavirus typically spreads via airborne droplets (and likely aerosols as well), according to the article. "Throughout the entire pandemic so far, there has continued to be shipping of products all over the world. If transmission via surfaces — whether frozen or refrigerated or not — were a major driver of infection, we would be seeing many case reports on it," Howell said. "The fact that we're not suggests that it is not a major route of infection." She recommended that shippers and shoppers stay vigilant and diligent. "The best thing that can be done by the manufacturers, shippers, and others in the supply chain is to have a strong, enforced policy of wearing masks, washing hands, and staying home when sick. The best thing for consumers to do is simply to avoid touching their face until they've had a chance to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer."

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