

## Why You Shouldn't Touch Shared Surfaces

*The best way to avoid getting sick from a shared surface is to not touch it in the first place.*

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Touching a contaminated surface can spread disease. The science confirms this.

How long can pathogens remain infectious on surfaces?

- SARS-Cov-2 Virus (COVID-19): hours or days<sup>1,2,3</sup>
- Influenza Virus: days<sup>4</sup>
- Strep and Pneumonia Bacteria: days<sup>5</sup>
- Hepatitis and Rotavirus: months<sup>6</sup>

COVID-19 is believed to spread through aerosols or respiratory droplets<sup>7</sup> and contaminated surfaces (fomites).<sup>8</sup> CDC urges frequent hand washing and provides disinfecting guidelines,<sup>9</sup> but disinfection may require a dwell time of up to five minutes between uses<sup>10</sup> and cannot always be

trusted.<sup>11,12</sup> Frequent use of hand sanitizers carries serious health risks,<sup>13</sup> and CDC has found no evidence of enhanced protection from antimicrobial coatings.<sup>14</sup>

An infected person can contaminate an ATM, kiosk or voting machine by coughing, sneezing or even just talking, and subsequent contact carries risk.<sup>6</sup> People on average touch their face every three or four minutes, completing the path for transmission.<sup>15</sup>

Surface transmission may be responsible for as many as one in four COVID-19 post-lockdown deaths.<sup>16</sup> Even fecal bacteria has been found on many touchscreens.<sup>17</sup>

The safest way to use an ATM, kiosk, credit card or voting machine, keypad or shared tablet is to not touch shared surfaces.

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