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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?

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

Many pathogens are believed to spread through aerosols or respiratory droplets[7] and contaminated surfaces (fomites).[8] CDC urges frequent hand washing and provides disinfecting guidelines,[9] but disinfection may require a dwell time of up to five minutes between uses[10] and cannot always be trusted.[11,12] Frequent use of hand sanitizers carries serious health risks,[13] and CDC has found no evidence of enhanced protection from antimicrobial coatings.[14]

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

Surface transmission may be responsible for as many as one in four coronavirus post-lockdown deaths.[16] Even fecal bacteria has been found on many touchscreens.[17]

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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