

SAFETY ADVICE DESIGNED TO KEEP YOUR STAFF SAFE AND YOUR BUSINESS COMPLIANT



Use of Mobiles while in the Bathroom

We're all guilty. Bathroom time has become a time to respond to texts and check our Instagram likes. Given what we use the toilet for, it's safe to say that using a Mobile Device at the same time is a really gross habit.

Bathrooms are covered in germs, pathogens, and enteric bacteria (from the intestinal tract), mostly from faecal matter. According to the experts, the most contaminated surfaces are the door and toilet handles, the faucet, and the floor — in fact, studies found that one-fourth of purses had faecal matter from resting on bathroom floors.

Main Points:

- Even if you wash your hands, you can still touch a germ-coated surface like the doorknob and re-contaminate yourself. The amount of germs or bacteria in the bathroom really depends on how often it's cleaned and sanitized, which you can control at home. But with public bathrooms where so many people are bringing in germs and bacteria...not so much.
- When you flush the toilet, water with faeces and urine sprays about six feet in every direction. And the aerosols increase with every flush, so if it's a public bathroom, there is dirty toilet water coating literally everything — especially the toilet paper dispenser, because it's right next to the toilet bowl.
- Any surface that the aerosols settle on can transmit things between people, so every time you set your phone down, it becomes contaminated with germs and faecal matter. Not to mention that it'll pick up whatever the last person placed on there, which could've been dirty toilet paper, used sanitary pads, etc. You really never know.
- According to the experts, there have been outbreaks of norovirus, E. coli, salmonella, shigella, hepatitis A, MRSA, Streptococcus, and the common stomach flu — all linked to public bathrooms.

- Urine can transmit pink eye and respiratory infections, if you get the germs and pathogens on your hands in the bathroom and then touch your face, eyes, nose, or mouth.

So yes, clean hands are a must. But...sadly not everyone washes their hands every single time, so even if you did, you might be touching the same door handle that was touched by someone who skipped the soap. Norovirus, the most common cause of adult diarrhoea, is almost always linked to bad hand-washing habits.

- You might not eat a sandwich on the toilet, but would you eat a sandwich while checking Instagram after bringing your phone to the bathroom a few hours before? Probably yes. And as your fingers touch your phone and then the food, those germs from the bathroom end up right in your mouth. When you bring your phone to the bathroom, it's like leaving without washing your hands.

Discussion Points:

Studies show that 9 out of 10 phones had a potential disease-causing microbe, and 16% tested positive for faecal matter.

- So, when you use your phone in the bathroom, it essentially becomes a mobile germ carrier. The average person uses their cell phone for two hours a day, so it's very easy to recontaminate your hands and transmit the germs to yourself or someone else.
- If the bathroom is the root of the problem, the best solution is to keep your phone in your bag and away from the toilet. If you're home and you know your bathroom is super clean, then you might not have to worry as much (though you're still getting aerosolized faecal matter on it probably).

So, in general, just don't.

- Germs aside, you're also risking dropping and drowning your phone in the toilet every time you bring it with you. Even if the rice trick works and your phone survives, now it's totally contaminated with germs and faecal matter in the smallest nooks and crannies," DISGUSTING.