

Germs

There are more than two billion different kinds of germs. Germs are with us from the time we are born until our last breath. They live on and in us. They are important to keep us healthy. At times, they make us sick. There are good germs and bad germs. All germs do not cause **infections**. Some people have used germs to develop medicines and food that improve health and the environment.

Some scientists study germs by testing **bacteria** on public surfaces. Sponges, dishwashing clothes, refrigerator handles, and sinks are the most likely to contain germs. Desks, backpacks, water fountains, and **cafeteria** trays also have a lot of germs. One scientist said that it would be safer to eat off a toilet seat than off the kitchen table. The toilet seat had the least amount of **bacteria** if the lid is put down while flushing.

The force of a sneeze can send 100,000 germs across a distance of 5 to 32 feet. Getting rid of germs is just as important as spotting germs. Germs cannot survive in hot **temperatures**. Using bleach can help keep an area safe. Keeping the hands clean is the best way to prevent germs.

Hand Sanitizer

If you are like most kids, you are reminded to wash your hands. Before you eat? Wash your hands. After you go to the bathroom? Wash your hands. Hands spread 80 percent of all infections. Even though washing helps kill germs and slow the spread of **bacteria**, we are not always around a sink with soap and water. At those times, it is possible to use hand **sanitizer** that you can rub into your hands. Does hand sanitizer really work?

Many hand sanitizers suggest that it kills 99.9% of germs. While hand sanitizers kill nearly all germs on lifeless surfaces like sinks, they might not kill all germs on your hands.



Hand sanitizers remove the outer layer of oil on your skin. It will not work if you do not use enough hand sanitizer or if you do not rub it carefully. Less than 99.9% germs on your hands will be killed. The kinds of germs that hand sanitizers kill are not the kind of germs that make us sick. Hand sanitizer may make your hands cleaner, but it will not keep you from getting sick. Using soap to clean your hands should be your first option. Hand sanitizer is a good second option.