

## Bacterial Counts on Key... - Blogs - Revolution Health

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### [Bacterial Counts on Keyboards vs. Toilet Seats](#)

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Recent [research from Great Britain](#) suggests that computer keyboards are more germ infested than toilet seats. Last year, microbiologists demonstrated that desk tops may be host to more bacterial colonies per square inch than toilet seats. What do these studies have in common? Dirty little human fingers.

What do I think about this? I think that bacteria will always be found in places frequented by fingers, and generally these bacteria don't do harm to healthy folks with intact skin. However, we should be aware that viruses (like colds, the flu, and [hepatitis A](#)) may be spread by contact - so when there's a "bug going around" you might want to eye keyboards and office desks with more suspicion.

Here's what I had to say about dirty desks last year:

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Microbiologist [Charles Gerba](#) has made a career out of scaring people with news of how dirty seemingly [innocent surfaces](#) can be. Dr. Gerba has taken media on [germ tours](#) of kitchens, bathrooms, and offices, and now in his [new research study](#) he finds that office desks have 400x more bacterial colonies than toilet seats. Moreover, he found that women's desks generally have 4x more bacteria than men's. He attributes this to women having more makeup and food products in their desks, as well as having greater contact with small children.

Well, before we all become totally grossed out and paranoid, lets think for a minute about this. If there are so many bacteria all around us (even on our desks) and we're generally not sick, then I guess we shouldn't all rush out to buy bleach and sanitizers. [Other studies](#) suggest that sanitizers disrupt the natural ecosystem around us, creating resistant organisms that are harder to kill.

Personally, I think that precautions should be taken to reduce transmission of viruses and bacterial infections (especially in the hospital environment) but that it is unreasonable, and perhaps even harmful, to wage an indiscriminate war on all bacteria everywhere.

If your loved ones are sick, minimize your exposure to their droplets, wash your hands frequently, and sanitize surfaces that they are in direct contact with. Otherwise, if you're feeling well, I wouldn't worry too much about bleaching your desk surface.

As one [microbiology lab](#) says,

"Support bacteria. It's the only culture some people have."

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