



Eww! Shopping cart handles loaded with germs

Survey tested six commonly handled items for bacteria content

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SEOUL - Shopping cart handles are the most bacteria-infested items among some commonly used objects while doorknobs on public bathrooms are not as bad as might be expected, according to a survey conducted in South Korea.

The Korea Consumer Protection Board tested six items that are commonly handled by the public and ran tests for their bacteria content.

Shopping cart handles led the way with 1,100 colony forming units of bacteria per 1.55 square inches followed by a mouse used on computers in Internet cafes, which had an average of 690 colony forming units.

"The reason that shopping cart handles had so much bacteria is because the area is larger than the others and people have more space to place their hands," Kwon Young-il, an official at the consumer body, said by telephone.

Hand straps on buses were next with 380 units, followed by bathroom doorknobs at 340.

Rounding out the list were elevator buttons at 130 colony forming units and hand straps on subways at 86.

The report released this week said washing hands with soap removes almost all of the bacteria.

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