

You Definitely Didn't Check It Out in THAT  
Condition Sir!



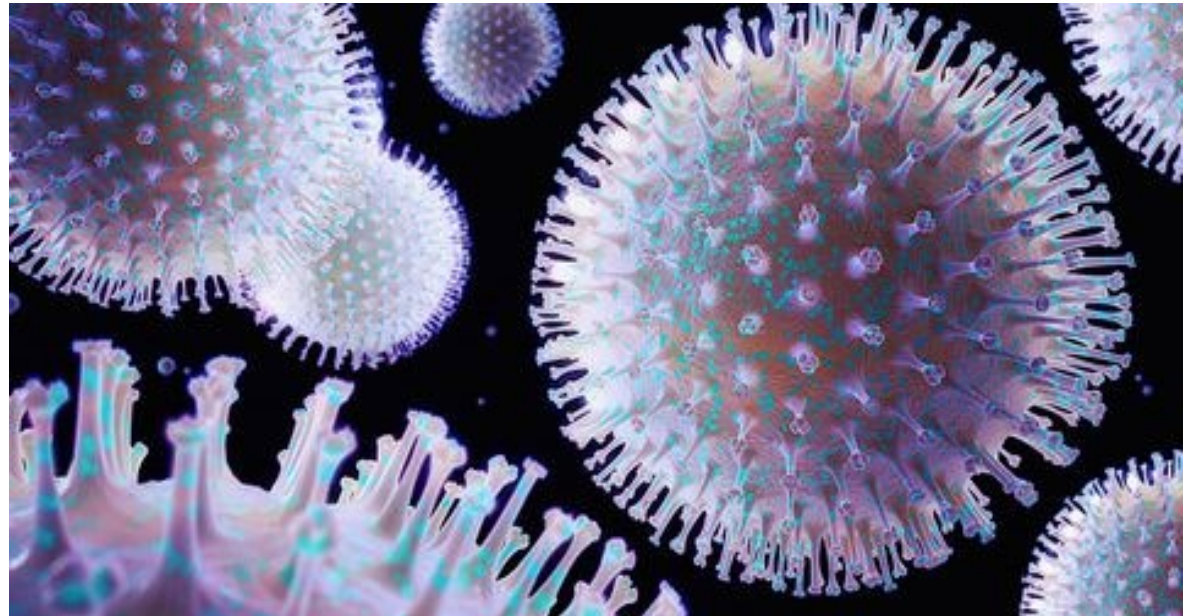
Our first finding –

There's not a lot of  
information out there  
regarding books and library  
materials and pathogens!

# How long can bacteria and viruses live outside the body? In other words, how germy are those items we are touching?

Be reassured – pathogens are actually pretty wimpy and cannot live for very long outside the body despite what commercials and advertising might tell you.

Moisture can be a great host for viruses to survive.



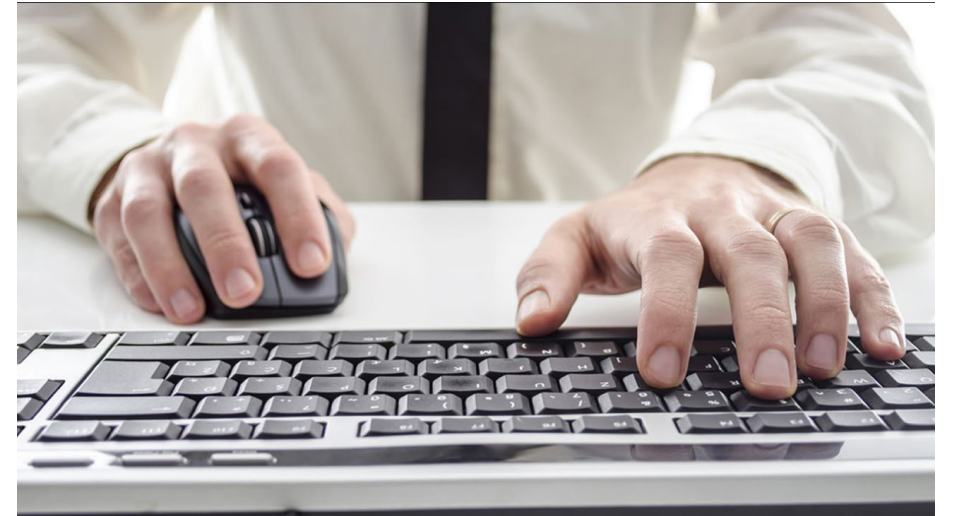
Pathogens can't survive for days or weeks outside of the body, as cleaning products might suggest.

Viruses can't multiply on their own – they must infect the cells of a living creature.

People will say “A virus can survive on a book for days...” What that actually means is that it can be isolated and identified. But that doesn't necessarily mean that its infectible. You have found the remnants of the virus, but it is no longer intact enough to cause an infection.

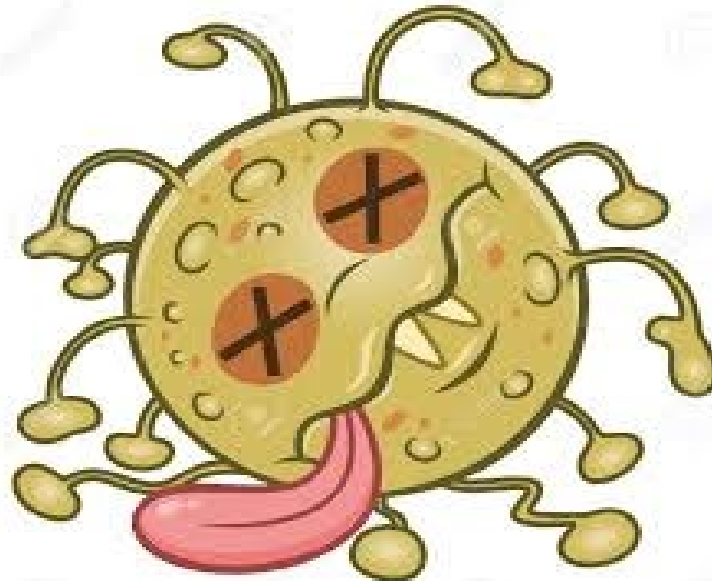
In 2011 in England, Dr. Jane Greatorex of Public Health England studied how long two strains of influenza A survived on a variety of common surfaces.

Her findings....





After **nine** hours, viable viruses were no longer found on most non-porous metal and plastic surfaces, such as aluminum and computer keyboards. On porous items, like soft toys, clothes and wooden surfaces, viable viruses disappeared after **four** hours.



The 2011 study in England by Dr. Greaterrex suggests that because flu viruses don't last beyond nine hours, public spaces such as classrooms and libraries should be free of contagious flu viruses the next morning.

But... if you want to be extra cautious, you can use disinfecting wipes every morning.



Juan contacted the CDC to get their opinion on the how to handle “germy” library materials...

For instance, within our consortium, we recently had a group of books that potentially were exposed to the norovirus.

The CDC does not have specific guidelines for libraries, but they do suggest disinfecting surfaces with a bleach-based household cleaner if it potentially has been exposed to the norovirus. They suggest leaving the bleach disinfectant on the area for five minutes and then cleaning the area again with soap and water.

The CDC recommends for materials that have been exposed to norovirus...

For the outside covers of books and DVDs and cases that can handle a liquid disinfectant, a hydrogen peroxide-based cleaner can be considered.

For the inside pages of books, they suggest trying ultraviolet light. They know that ultraviolet light type C (not UV-A or UV-B) has been shown to be effective against microorganisms including viruses. They do not have a recommended protocol for the strength of the light or duration.

As an alternative, the CDC suggests putting affected items in storage for several weeks or months to reduce the chance that the norovirus will survive on the pages and infect future patrons.





## Some other perspectives looking at the risks of handling library materials...

A sixteen year old teen, Cheyenne Deibert from Tennessee, performed a high school science fair project in which she tested library books to determine just how germey they were.

Her findings?

Books checked out within the last three days had a low level of microbes. They did not test positively for e coli.

More worrisome, was the threat of fungi and mold.

Another paper, written by Catherine Atwood for the American Institute for Conservation, supports Cheyenne Deibert's findings.

The paper, "*Notes on the Preservation of Personal Health*," concludes that mold and dust are health risk factors when handling materials.



According to the CDC and National Institute of Health, it is important to get your flu shot and wash your hands regularly.

Washing your hands is your best defense against getting sick!



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself from getting sick.

There are five steps to washing your hands the right way:

- Wet your hands with clean, running water, turn off the tap, and then apply soap.
- Lather your hands by them together with soap. Lather the back of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. (Sing “Happy Birthday twice.)
- Rinse your hands well under clean running water.
- Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

It is worth noting that if you have any open cuts on your hands, they should be covered with a bandage while handling library materials to further protect yourself .



HANDLING ITEMS THAT ARE  
GROSS, GERMY, OR OTHER



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MATERIALS TO HAVE ON HAND

- GLOVES (NON LATEX)
- GALLON ZIP LOCK BAG
- PLASTIC BAGS
- DISINFECTANT WIPES
- HAND SANITIZER
- FACE MASKS
- FIRST AID KIT



# HANDLING ICKY LIBRARY ITEMS

- USE GLOVES
- WASH/SANITIZE HANDS AFTER HANDLING ITEMS
- IN CASE OF VIRAL EXPOSURE CONTACT OWNING LIBRARY
- PLACE IN PLASTIC BAG DURING QUARANTINE PERIOD
- IF ITEM IS UNUSABLE, BILL
  - COVERED IN “SUBSTANCES”



# BOTTOM LINE

- “Overall, not many microbes showed up on the books she tested. None of the swabs transferred E. coli to the dishes. The teen compared her findings to results from scientific papers on library-book bacteria. The authors of those papers found bacteria and fungi on library books, and some of those germs might be resistant to antibiotic drugs. But like Cheyenne, they didn’t find high levels of microbes. They also concluded that fungi (such as molds) were probably more worrisome than bacteria. Mold can be harmful for people with lung problems such as asthma and cause disease in people with weak immune systems.”-BROOKSHIRE
- “‘I have never heard of anyone catching anything from a library book,’ infectious disease specialist Michael Z. David told the Wall Street Journal. David says that viruses and bacteria can indeed live on the pages of library books, but that the risk of actual infection is very, very low.’-MENTAL FLOSS



# What about bed bugs?

UGH!!! That's a whole different topic.

Stay tuned for our next SWAN Circ Users Group Meeting,  
when we will discuss...

*“OMG...Are Those Bedbugs Biting in My Books?!”*

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