

Flu Season is Upon Us

Objective: Increase personal awareness of everyday objects that may help spread pathogens from one person to another. Consider whether time is a factor in the spread of bacteria and viruses from these everyday objects.

Background:. We know that viruses must multiply within a host, but they can also survive outside of a host cell (for example, on a doorknob or faucet handle). Although they are not multiplying on a doorknob or faucet handle, they could, for a period of time, still infect a host cell if they came across one (if you touch the doorknob and then lick your fingers at lunch, for example). Eventually though, viruses will often be destroyed if they exist outside of a host for too long. At that point, they would then no longer be able to cause infection and disease in a new host, even if one came along.

Assignment: **Describe in a few sentences** how long the influenza virus can exist on the hard surface of an everyday object (like a doorknob or faucet handle) before it is destroyed. Compare this to the length of time an average bacterium can survive on doorknobs, faucet handles, or other hard surfaces.

Format: a piece of notebook paper is just fine—name at the top, please!

Points: 5 points

Due: this Friday, September 18th, hand in a hard copy to Dr. Mosovsky at the start of class