

## **Avoiding Germs in Public Restrooms**

ROSWELL, Ga. (December 7, 2000) – Just about anyone who works or travels outside the home uses a public restroom several times a day. In fact, the average office building tenant spends more than three workdays a year in the restroom.

Add to this resistant bacteria, E. coli outbreaks, and new infectious diseases. It seems that every time we turn around we're confronted with more news about germs and their threat to our health.

Since you can't stop other people from spreading germs after using the bathroom, here are some suggestions for germ avoidance in public restrooms:

- Look for enclosed toilet paper systems that let you touch only the product that you need, reducing the potential for cross-contamination. Toilet paper in an enclosed system is also protected from dirt and moisture.
- If you have a choice, pick a restroom with no-touch faucets and toilet flushing devices. That way you can use the restroom without touching a lot of handles or levers that may harbor germs.
- No-touch paper towel and no-touch soap systems offer the same benefits when washing hands.
- Shut the faucet with a paper towel after washing your hands and also use it to open the door handle before throwing it away.
- Try not to touch bathroom surfaces after you have washed your hands – since germs can be spread to others via restroom fixtures, surfaces, faucets and product dispensers.

And lastly, remember to wash your hands correctly! Use soap and warm, running water. Wash your skin well, including your wrists, palms, back of the hands, fingers and under your fingernails. Rub your hands together for at least 10 to 15 seconds. If you wash your hands correctly, you will greatly reduce the chances of spreading germs, including those that have developed resistance to antibiotics. Disease-causing germs can enter your body when your unwashed hands touch your nose, mouth or open wounds.

For more information on germ protection, visit the Kimberly-Clark Skin Wellness Institute web site at [www.kcskinhealth.com](http://www.kcskinhealth.com).