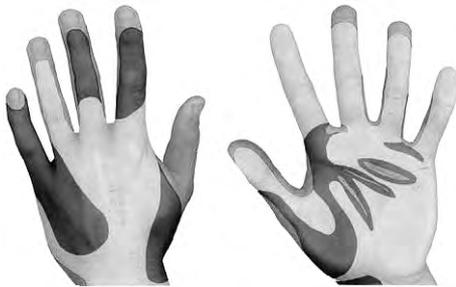


Tekst 11

People Wash Their Hands More When They're Watched

By Laura Allen



Handwashing Map: Areas most frequently missed when handwashing

- 1 A new public health study released just in time for Global Handwashing Day offers not one but two gems of Science-Confirms-the-Obvious wisdom. Firstly: the gee-whizzer that men have poorer personal hygiene than women. Secondly, that people are more likely to wash their hands when others are watching.
- 2 In an aim to find the most effective message to encourage handwashing in public toilets, a research team from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine installed a LED screen at the doorway of a gas station toilet on a British highway. It flashed a series of messages employing a variety of tactics familiar to anyone with a mother, such as:
Educating: "Water doesn't kill germs, soap does."
Nagging: "Don't be a dope -- wash with soap!"
The Gross-Out: "Soap it off or eat it later."
The Hairy Eyeball: "Is the person next to you washing with soap?"
- 3 Wireless sensors installed in the doorway and the soap dispensers secretly monitored a whopping 200,000 toilet-goers. The team found that 64 percent of female visitors reached for the soap, yet only 32 percent of the men did. Compare that to surveys that report that 95 percent of people say they wash their hands after using a public toilet.
- 4 What message got the most mileage? Although "Soap it off or eat it later" worked terrifically for men, "Is the person next to you washing with soap?" was the only message that increased the wash rate across both genders. Yep, public shame does the trick.
- 5 "It's difficult to know what kind of message is most effective at changing this everyday behaviour, so it's important to experimentally test what works best in a real setting," says Robert Aunger, the study lead. "That

way you can save money and make sure your programme will be effective prior to rolling out any public health campaign at great expense."

- 6 In honour of Global Handwashing Day I encourage you to take hygiene to heart today, and lather up for the greater good.

COMMENTS

STAUFF: While I can confirm that the percentages for male handwashing are approximately correct, it's worth noting that the woman's purse is among the most filthy items routinely carried around, probably far worse than a man's hands. That's because of the multitude of surfaces women put their purses on and the fact that they're not often cleaned. Fear the purse.

MIFF78: Our immune system is for the most part reactive, requiring access to foreign stimulus to become more robust. It seems to me the more handwashing one does, the less opportunity one's immune system gets to come into contact with pathological bacteria, viruses, and parasites. I'm not saying we should all be running around with filthy hands, but since our health is dependent on a little access to dirt, being ludicrous about handwashing seems counter-productive. Of course I'm wholly unsurprised that this research comes from the ultimate nanny state.

ROBERT: The one in a hundred that proves a "known fact" is wrong, is why these kinds of studies are needed. Once, as we all know, the earth was obviously flat, man could not fly, and disease was caused by demons and vapours.

CUTEY97: What about hand sanitizer?

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- 1p **38** What is the main point made in paragraph 1?
The recent findings about handwashing habits
- A are in line with what had been generally assumed beforehand.
 - B come as a surprise to a lot of experts on human behaviour.
 - C have shown there is no difference between males and females.
 - D support the need for organizing a Global Handwashing Day.
- “Compare that ... public toilet.” (end paragraph 3)
- 1p **39** What is the function of this remark made by the writer?
- A To express surprise at the methods used by the researchers.
 - B To point out the inconsistency between people's words and actions.
 - C To stimulate readers to gather more information about the subject.
 - D To stress that there is controversy about the researchers' conclusions.
- “People wash their hands more when they're watched” (titel)
- 1p **40** Welke zin uit de tekst geeft de reden hiervoor?
Citeer de eerste twee woorden van die zin.
- 1p **41** Welke persoon geeft een reden om juist minder vaak je handen te wassen?
- A Laura Allen (schrijfster van het artikel)
 - B Robert Auger (alinea 5)
 - C STAUFF (comments)
 - D MIFF78 (comments)
 - E ROBERT (comments)
 - F CUTEY97 (comments)