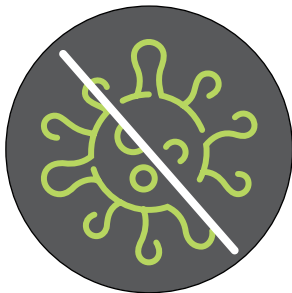
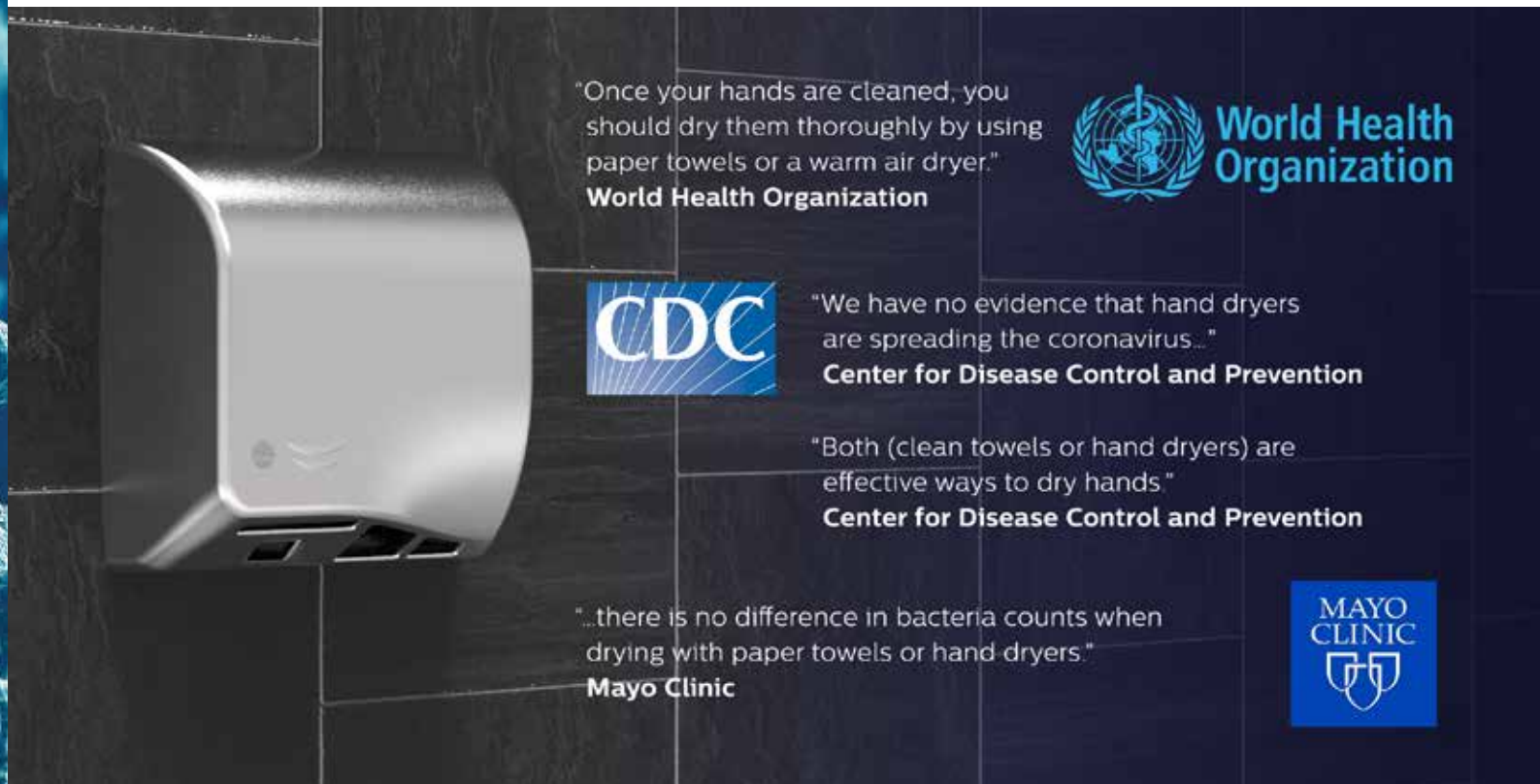


HAND DRYERS JUST THE FACTS



FACT 1

Global health authorities agree there is no evidence hand dryers spread microbes, such as the coronavirus:

"There is currently not enough scientific evidence to determine if using a clean towel or an air hand dryer to dry your hands is more effective at reducing germs on your hands.

Both are effective ways to dry your hands." - CDC, 2020

"There is no evidence that hand dryers pose a concern for spreading viruses, like the one that causes COVID-19, in restrooms. When it comes to limiting the spread of germs in restrooms, the more important issues are proper hand washing, regular cleaning and sanitization, and modern HVAC systems to improve air circulation."

- Medical microbiologist Michael P. McCann, Ph.D., professor of biology, Saint Joseph's University, Pennsylvania

Some people/organizations have cited studies claiming that hand dryers spread germs. It is important to be aware of who sponsors each study, as the organization likely has a vested interest in the findings of the research, and the results may be biased.

Also, studies about hand dryers "spewing germs" involve artificial test conditions, which can also be skewed. Think of it this way: bacteria are placed on a glove and set underneath a hand dryer's moving airstream. To be sure, any type of air causes particle movement, which makes it hard to know exactly what is causing germs to circulate. Particles can move from an HVAC or ventilation system, a neglected dirty restroom environment, or even our own breath.

At the end of the day, Amesh Adalja, scholar at Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, says that "the choice of paper towel versus hand dryer likely won't have a significant impact on your chances of catching coronavirus."



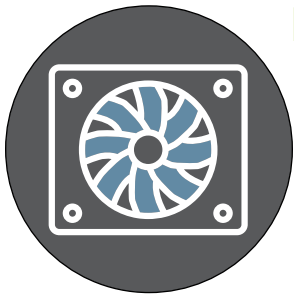
FACT 2

The single most effective way to remove germs from hands is using the proper hand washing procedure. This means washing hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and completely drying them with either a hand dryer or paper towel.

The most effective hand hygiene regimen always starts with thorough washing using soap and water for a full 20 seconds, as recommended by the CDC. Using soap is key because it dislodges dirt and germs from hands. It is important to rub vigorously, washing between fingers, tops and bottoms of hands and underneath fingernails. After scrubbing, clean water should be used to adequately rinse soap and germs down the drain.

If someone engages in proper hand washing techniques for 20 seconds before drying hands, contaminants are already removed from skin, and therefore, left-over germs on hands are negligible or removed.

Both hand dryers and paper towels are very useful tools for drying hands, particularly if sufficient time is taken to thoroughly dry them. According to the CDC, germs spread more easily when hands are wet so make sure to dry hands completely, whichever hand drying method is used.



FACT 3

Some naysayers believe hand dryers discharge aerosolized contaminants that were not washed off hands. The broader issue is that restrooms should have good exhaust and ventilation systems to remove pathogens and infectious microbes in the air.

Science tells us that bacteria, viruses, and other microorganisms naturally spread in restrooms, no matter the hand drying option. Air and surfaces in restrooms are regularly exposed to microorganisms, as they are in any space in which people circulate. This situation points at a larger issue, which is overall air quality and the need for proper ventilation and air filtration in restroom spaces.

In fact, some infectious disease experts think hand dryers can assist in that effort. ***"I think air dryers help rather than hurt — they move air around. If there happens to be a person next to you that's infected, the air dryer will disperse the air, and you're much less likely to get an infectious dose of the virus."*** – William Schaffner, MD, a professor of medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, as quoted on WebMD in July 2020



FACT 4

Regular cleaning and sanitization in restrooms will keep restrooms cleaner and minimize germs.

While there is a misperception that hand dryers blow germs, a messy and unclean restroom doesn't exactly help to dispel the myth that restrooms are havens for germs.

Proper and frequent cleaning and disinfection is key for restrooms, especially for high-touch surfaces, such as doorknobs, faucets, sinks, toilets, stall door openers and paper towel dispensers. According to the CDC, daily cleaning with soap and water reduces germs, dirt, and impurities on the surface, and should be done frequently, especially if there is high traffic. It's also important to disinfect surfaces to kill germs at least once daily, and more often if the restroom is busy. Finally, it is of the utmost importance to follow cleaning and disinfectant instructions carefully, and train staff on their safe and proper usage.



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