Hand Dryers and Hygiene

A definitive statement on the bacteriological safety of warm air

Nova Hand Dryers wants our distributors and end-users to be confident in the safety and health benefits of warm-air hand and hair dryers. It is important to us that you feel comfortable and assured that our products are both reliable and hygienic.

Several studies have been published in well-known medical reviews on the health benefits and hygienic superiority of warm-air dryers. Hand dryers are almost unanimously declared to be more sanitary than other drying techniques.

Only one study, the Westminster report, has suggested something other than the praise warm-air dryers have always received. After careful scrutiny, independent researchers found the testing methods in the report to be inaccurate and incomplete. According to Dr. Syed Saatar of the University of Ottawa, "certain flaws in the methodology… compromise its value" (3). This heavily biased paper, funded by the Association of Makers of Soft Tissue Papers, was not published or recognized by any medical or health review. In an attempt to spread false and damaging information to the public, however, the researchers sent copies to many major media centers in the hope that this information would be eagerly gobbled up by media scaremongers.

Most researchers claim that "irrespective of the hand-washing agent used" electric air drying produces "the highest and cloth the lowest reduction in numbers" of bacteria and viruses on washed hands (Ansari et al. 243). Theories explaining why warm-air dryers are more hygienic have been put forward by medical authorities.

Doctors at the University of Ottawa have proposed that "the blowing of warm air may lead to an accelerated dehydration of the skin surface, thereby affecting the viability" of the microorganisms (248). Moreover, the warm air may "penetrate all the crevices in the skin, whereas absorbent towels may not reach such areas, even though the skin appears dry" (Ansari et al 248). Hand dryers are so effective that researchers Meers and Leong have declared that there is "no bacteriological reason to exclude them from clinical areas" (171). Paper towels, on the other hand, create unsanitary conditions even *after* use. The *European Cleaning* review affirms that "unless paper towel waste is regularly cleaned, it can be a lasting source of bacteriological infection" (63).

Furthermore, researchers find that "on no occasion" is there any "evidence for the actual growth of bacteria or fungi" inside a dryer (Saatar 3). As a result of the dry atmosphere caused by constant heating, bacteria counts are often two- to four- times lower inside the dryer than on other surfaces in the washroom, such as the sinks, door-knobs and soap dispensers (Saatar 7).

Warm-air dryers prove to be the leader in efficient and hygienic methods of drying. In addition, they are the most cost-efficient and environmentally sound drying technique. Whether Nova dryers be installed in schools, restaurants, shopping centers, industries or hospitals, each individual who uses our product is guaranteed safety and satisfaction. Nova will even conduct a formal analysis of the financial and environmental benefits of electric dryers for each of our customers. Our company will also be pleased to provide its clientele with copies of every study described in this text. We are confident that you will agree that warm-air dryers are clearly the best alternative in drying.

Bibliography

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