

9 Items You Should Never Share

To avoid infections and other maladies, it's best to avoid sharing these:

- 1. Underwear/swimwear.** Bacteria, fungus and viruses breed in damp, dark places. Even the washing machine can't guarantee these are completely clean.
- 2. Deodorant/antiperspirant.** Organic and roll-ons lead to sharing the most germs, bacteria, fungus, yeast, skin cells and hair.
- 3. Pumice stones/emory boards/hairbrushes.** Sharing these common beauty products can transmit skin and nail fungal infections, lice and plantar warts.
- 4. Makeup.** Makeup has a relatively short shelf life and quickly harbors bacteria. It gets worse when shared and can lead to spreading pimples and eye infections.
- 5. Toothbrushes.** To avoid colds, herpes and a general swapping of foreign bacteria, everyone should use their own toothbrush – every time.
- 6. Water bottles/drinking glasses.** Colds, strep throat, mononucleosis, herpes, mumps and meningitis can all be transferred from shared beverages.
- 7. Razors/tweezers.** Stubble is better than mixing dead skin cells with bacteria, which can allow viruses and bacteria to enter the blood through tiny nicks in the skin. If tweezers puncture the skin, you can start sharing blood-borne diseases. Soak these in alcohol to be safe.
- 8. Towels.** Use a new towel each time or designate a different color or hook for each person. Acne, pink eye, cold sores and infections can be caused by sharing towels often covered in bacteria, fungus and mildew from damp environments. Loofas are also best not shared.
- 9. Digital equipment.** From food particles to fecal matter (yep!), digital equipment like keyboards, cell phones and ear buds are full of germs. The ears are a moist environment, so sharing ear buds can swap bacteria that can cause infections, zits, boils, ear fungus and swimmer's ear. Use alcohol wipes frequently.

Excerpted from Advocate Health News, Kate Eller 8/16/18.

Wishing you joy and good health,
Mary Bohlen RN
SJParishNurse@comcast.net