

Car interiors a breeding ground for deadly bacteria

27th July, 2015

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via frankieleon on twitter.com

Many people feel safer in their own cars than risk getting germs while travelling on public transport. The truth for many car drivers and passengers

is the opposite. A British survey discovered that most cars are so dirty inside that they are a potential breeding ground for bacteria such as the deadly E.Coli. The survey was carried out by the University of Nottingham. Microbiologists analysed steering wheels, hand brakes, foot wells and seats to find out what bacteria might be lurking there. They found that most cars were dirty enough to harbour the deadly bacteria. They also discovered that most car owners gave very little thought to the importance of keeping their car interior hygienic.

Cars are an ideal place for germs to live. Over half of car owners have dropped food onto seats, while a third have spilt drinks. Other owners spoke of children's vomit and 'pet accidents'. Despite this, only a quarter of owners cleaned the inside of their cars once every three months and most drivers still eat and drink at the wheel. Common problems the researchers found were drink bottles under seats, used tissues in storage areas and rotting food on carpets and seat covers. A spokeswoman said: "It's really worrying to see just how dirty people are letting their cars get. We were expecting to find some bad stuff from the University of Nottingham's testing but we didn't expect to find bacteria relating to E.coli in there."

Sources: *DailyMail / Express.com / home.bt.com*

Writing

Public transport is safer and more germ-free than cars. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

feel safer / risk / germs / public transport / the opposite / steering wheel / bacteria / ideal place / spilt drinks / accidents / wheel / common problems / dirty / testing

True / False

- People feel safer on public transport than in cars. T / F
- All cars are dirty enough to breed dangerous bacteria. T / F
- Microbiologists checked hand brakes and steering wheels. T / F
- Most car owners gave little thought to hygiene in cars. T / F
- More than half of car owners have dropped food on car seats. T / F
- Around 30% of car owners have spilt drinks inside their car. T / F
- Researchers said rotting food and used tissues were a problem. T / F
- Someone said they expected a university to find bad staff. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1. opposite | a. hide |
| 2. potential | b. decomposing |
| 3. deadly | c. germ-free |
| 4. harbour | d. mishaps |
| 5. hygienic | e. anticipate |
| 6. ideal | f. possible |
| 7. accidents | g. concerning |
| 8. rotting | h. contrary |
| 9. worrying | i. perfect |
| 10. expect | j. lethal |

Discussion – Student A

- How clean is the world around you?
- What do you do to avoid germs?
- What do you think about what you read?
- How dirty do you think cars are inside?
- What should people do to make sure their cars are hygienic?
- Will you think about germs next time you get in a car?
- Why are many cars so dirty inside?
- How often should drivers clean steering wheels?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. travelling on public | a. germs to live |
| 2. a potential breeding | b. areas |
| 3. bacteria might be | c. interior hygienic |
| 4. dirty enough to harbour the | d. food |
| 5. the importance of keeping their car | e. lurking there |
| 6. an ideal place for | f. transport |
| 7. only a quarter | g. to E.coli |
| 8. storage | h. deadly bacteria |
| 9. rotting | i. of owners |
| 10. bacteria relating | j. ground |

Discussion – Student B

- Will you think twice about eating in cars in future?
- What other everyday things can carry germs?
- How hygienic is your car?
- What do you think of drivers who eat and drink at the wheel?
- Where are the dirtiest places in cars?
- How can car makers make cars more hygienic?
- What does the inside of a car say about the car owner?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Spelling

- while travelling on public ntrsatpor
- drivers and gasenepsrs
- a atpltnioe breeding ground
- bacteria might be ikrglun there
- dirty enough to rruoahb the deadly bacteria
- keeping their car interior egyihicn
- an ideal place for egsrm to live
- children's mtvio
- pet ectdcisna
- used sstiseu
- asteogr areas
- ntxcepieg to find some bad stuff

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. f	3. j	4. a	5. c
6. i	7. d	8. b	9. g	10. e

Role Play

Role A – Car steering wheel

You think a car steering wheel is the riskiest place for germs. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their places aren't so risky. Also, tell the others which is the cleanest of these (and why): a computer keyboard, a hospital waiting room or a restaurant toilet.

Role B – Computer keyboard

You think a computer keyboard is the riskiest place for germs. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their places aren't so risky. Also, tell the others which is the cleanest of these (and why): a car steering wheel, a hospital waiting room or a restaurant toilet.

Role C – Hospital waiting room

You think a hospital waiting room is the riskiest place for germs. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their places aren't so risky. Also, tell the others which is the cleanest of these (and why): a computer keyboard, a car steering wheel or a restaurant toilet.

Role D – Restaurant toilet

You think a restaurant toilet is the riskiest place for germs. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their places aren't so risky. Also, tell the others which is the cleanest of these (and why): a computer keyboard, a hospital waiting room or a car steering wheel.

Speaking – Germ risk

Rank these with your partner. Put the riskiest things for germs at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| • car steering wheel | • hospital waiting room |
| • computer keyboard | • train |
| • supermarket cart | • restaurant toilet |
| • toilet seat | • school canteen |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	T	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.