

WCBS-TV 2 News

Study: Handbags May Have More Bacteria Than A Toilet Seat

Bacteria May Collect On Both The Inside And Outside Of Your Purse

NEW YORK (CBSNewYork) — Many ladies love their handbags and will spend a lot of [money](#) for the latest and greatest, but a new study says what is inside those bags may be covered in germs worse than what you'll find in the bathroom.

As CBS 2's Cindy Hsu reported Wednesday, the study said your purse may, in fact, have more bacteria than your average toilet seat.

Some people admit that the inside of the purses is less than orderly. Susan Ecker said hers is a disaster.

"You'll find chocolate that's fallen out of its wrapper and all sorts of things that are buried at the bottom," she said.

Even a toothpick, loose mints and some crumbs were down there.

Clara Fernandez also opened her bag.

"I have a [cell phone](#), I have make-up, candy, my medicine," she said.

A new study by Initial Washroom [Hygiene](#) Solutions said a lot of the stuff we stuff in our bags is covered in germs. Topping the list is hand cream, which can carry more bacteria than a toilet seat. "That's gross," Fernandez said. "I can't believe that."

Also up there are lipstick and mascara, and even hand-sanitizer bottles.

Doctor Sorana Segal-Maurer with New York Hospital-Queens said [cell phones](#) are also covered in bacteria.

"We don't want to put it down. It goes into the bathroom with some people — not a good idea," Segal-Maurer said. "You really need to wipe it down."

And when it comes to fruit, don't throw it in your bag.

“Number one, you’re probably not going to wash your hands before you go reaching for it, and number two, it’s floating around next to all the other stuff in your bag and then you want to put it in your mouth — it’s not a good idea,” Segal-Maurer said.

Another thing to keep in mind is the outside of the bag. Very often when we hit the restroom, there is no hook in sight to hang it, so we take our bags and we drop them on the restroom floor.

Segal-Maurer said you should never do that, and you should make sure you use anti-bacterial wipes to clean the bottom of your bag along with the handles. She said there’s no reason to panic, and it’s unlikely you’ll get sick from the bacteria in your bag, but it’s back to the basics of washing your hands

The study also found leather handbags tend to carry the most bacteria because the spongy texture makes a perfect breeding ground.