

Clean Hands – Longer Life

“Live long and prosper.”

If Dr. Spock were to give a course on living long he would probably say, “Live long and prosper – wash your hands”. People who wash their hands live longer, healthier lives than people who don’t.

Some of society’s most fearsome diseases, including several diseases that can kill, are caused by microscopic bugs that are passed from person to person on human hands. Those hands don’t even have to touch each other to pass the viruses, bacteria, and other bugs that make us sick. Whenever we touch a doorknob, or turn the taps in a public washroom, or push the turnstile to get on the subway, and especially when we handle money, our hands are picking up germs from dozens or even hundreds of other people’s hands. If we rub our eyes, or wipe our nose, or handle our food while those germs are on our hands we could infect ourselves and get very seriously ill. We could die.

It’s a disease factory out there and it’s our hands that bring it home for us.

People who wash those bugs off their hands or use an alcohol hand sanitizer at appropriate times will get sick less often than if they hadn’t washed. People who get sick less often - everything else being equal - tend to live longer lives. Certainly those hand washers enjoy their lives more without the coughing, sneezing, retching, and diarrhea.

Clean hands can be a matter of life and death.

Live long and prosper – wash your hands.