
Hospital Mobile Phones 'Superbug' Scare

Researchers from the Faculty of Medicine at the Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey, tested the phones of doctors and nurses in hospital operating rooms and intensive care units. They found that almost 95% were contaminated with bacteria of different types, potentially causing infections ranging from relatively minor skin complaints to life-threatening illness. Only 10% of staff regularly cleaned their phone.

According to the authors, "Our results suggest cross-contamination of bacteria between the hands of healthcare workers and their mobile phones. These mobile phones could act as a reservoir of infection which may facilitate patient-to-patient transmission of bacteria in a hospital setting".

Their findings reveal an obvious need for active strategies to prevent contamination of mobile phones and other hand-held electronic devices: strict infection-control procedure, environmental disinfection, hand hygiene and decontamination methods are recommended.

Journal reference:

Fatma Ulger, Saban Esen, Ahmet Dilek, Kerametdin Yanik, Murat Gunaydin and Hakan Leblebicioglu. Are we aware how contaminated our mobile phones are with nosocomial pathogens? *Annals of Clinical Microbiology and Antimicrobials*, (in press)

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