

**KNOWING WHERE THE GERMS ARE**  
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When you think of germs in public places you think of places like bathrooms and doctor's offices. However, according to MSN health 3 of the 8 germy items are found in restaurants.

Restaurant menus are rarely washed and handled by many people in a day. A menu can harbor cold and flu viruses for up to 18 hours. Most people wash their hands with soap and water, or hand sanitizer upon entering the restaurant. However, it is best to wash your hands after ordering your food.

Condiment dispensers are rarely cleaned with bleach and let's face it even if they were cleaned each day, there are lots of people out there that do not wash their hands properly before handling the condiments. You need to pull out that hand sanitizer again, if you use the condiments. Holding the bottle with a napkin will not protect you from germs.

The item that surprised me the most was lemon wedges. 70 percent of lemon wedges contain disease containing microbes. It is best to skip that lemon wedge with your drink of choice.

**2 Methods to Properly Cleanse Your Hands:**

- 1. Use hot or warm running water. Lather hands with soap. Rub hands together for at least 15 seconds. Wash the back of hands, between fingers and under fingernails. Rinse well with warm water. Pat hands dry, beginning at the wrist and moving down. Turn off the water, using a paper towel. If using a public restroom dispense the paper towel, before washing your hands and use a paper towel to cover the doorknob to exit the restroom.**
- 2. Use an alcohol based hand sanitizer. Spread the sanitizer thoroughly by briskly rubbing hands together until dry. This should take approximately 15 seconds. The amount of sanitizer needed varies by product. If hands are visibly soiled use soap and water vs. hand sanitizer.**

Research for this article was obtained from MSN health at [health.msn.com](http://health.msn.com).