



## Germs lurking on your cell phone?

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TEMPE, Ariz -- Think about all the gadgets around us that we touch all the time -- iPhones, iPads, Androids, keyboards. But did you ever think about what is on those devices that you can't see?

They're filthy, disgusting and downright nasty looking. But, germs are everywhere, including your cell phone. In fact, some experts, say every square inch of your cell phone has 25,000 germs.

Exactly what do you think is lurking on your cell phone?

3 On Your Side wanted to know just how dirty are our phones and other things we touch. So, we partnered up with Stan Kikkert, a germ expert at Mesa Community College. He said, "There are a couple of them that seem to have more counts than

others."

Kikkert provided us with swabs and sterile petri dishes. Then we got to work swabbing. First, we started with cell phones. Then, we moved on to an ATM and swabbed the buttons. We also swabbed a picnic table, an elevator button and finally the handle on a trash recycling bin. Then, we took our samples back to Kikkert. Our samples were placed in an incubator for about 48 hours.

Then, it was time to see what was on the cell phones we swabbed. And what we discovered was surprising. Kikkert observed, "You're getting a little bit of counts, not tremendous we are getting looks like a little bit of diversity too, some bacteria, mold and a couple of fungi on some of these as well."

Kikkert says the cell phones were not as germey as you might think and says there could be a good reason for that.

"Some of them are newer phones and there could be coatings and things on those phones that may be inhibit microbial growth."

That's good news but what about the other things we swabbed?

"The ATM has quite a bit of counts on here," said Kikkert.

It's probably no surprise we found germs and bacteria on the ATM buttons, but the germiest items included the handle people used to throw away their recyclable items.

"Looks like a lot of fungi actually in this particular case but there's definitely some bacteria and stuff growing as well," explained Kikkert.

As it turned out, the things with the fewest germs was, believe it or not, the elevator button and picnic table where bacterial growth was surprisingly low.