



Safely Store Family Toothbrushes

Tips to store your family's toothbrushes

Toilet Plume

Do you have a family member who leaves their toothbrush everywhere: on the carpet, stair, kitchen counter, or on the bathroom counter? Maybe the dog is moving the toothbrush around. It is impossible to keep a toothbrush sterile as we live in a world of germs, however the riskiest places to leave a toothbrush is on top of the toilet tank cover or on the bathroom counter near the toilet due to toilet plume.

Toilet plume is the cloud of microscopic particles that sprays into the air when someone flushes the toilet. Toilet plume consists of feces, urine, and may include other microorganisms such as E. Coli, Salmonella, and Clostridium difficile. The spray can reach up to six feet away from the toilet, depending on toilet type and pressure flush. While toilet plume typically does not cause illness, it increases the risk of getting ill with fever, diarrhea, infection, vomiting, and stomach-pain.

Though the size of a toilet plume can reduce greatly by simply closing the toilet seat lid, it is safest to store toothbrushes elsewhere.

How to Store the Family's Toothbrushes

Do not use a medicine cabinet to store your family's toothbrushes. The medicine cabinet seals off air-flow and creates a dark and humid enclosure suitable for microbial growth. The following are some tips on how to store the family's toothbrushes:

- Use holders made for storing toothbrushes.
- Set the toothbrushes as far away from the toilet and sink as possible to avoid toilet plume and splashes.
- Store the toothbrushes where there's sufficient airflow to ensure proper drying.
- Do not let the bristles touch from different toothbrush heads to avoid spreading bacteria across toothbrushes.
- If you must store the toothbrushes on the counter, use a toothbrush head cover. Another alternative to the bathroom counter is a wall-mounted toothbrush holder.

Wherever you choose to store the family's toothbrushes, throw the toothbrush away if it fell into the trash or toilet.



Simple Toothbrush Rules:

- Do not share your toothbrush with others to avoid cross-contamination. Rinse and dry your toothbrush thoroughly before storing it. Clean your toothbrush holder regularly.
- Disinfect your toothbrush each week by soaking it in disinfectant mouthwash, denture cleaner, or hydrogen peroxide.
- Replace your toothbrush every 3-4 months or when the bristles flare.



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