

Get with the auto-sensor tap programme in food centres

I COULD not agree more with Mr Chia Lin Cheok's suggestion about the need to install auto-sensor taps ('Hygiene', Tuesday). I have long been disturbed by the use of manual taps in public places, especially toilets, as such use is unhygienic.

These taps have to be pressed repeatedly, or in many cases even held down continuously, to wash one's hands. The health hazard is that users with dirty hands (for example, after using the toilet) use these taps, and contaminate them. And such contamination is repeated and increased with each new user.

If not auto-sensor taps, then taps in all public places (not only food centres and toilets) should be with a short arm or lever so users can turn it on and off with the arm or back of the hand.

Some months ago, there was a Forum letter about contamination on washroom door handles, and the need to have doors which can be opened without touching the handle. While I agree with that, manual taps pose a greater health hazard.

Auto-sensor taps where the water runs for only a few seconds are pointless. The best auto-sensors I have used are those at Raffles City and Changi Airport, where the water flow is constant and stops only when the hands are removed.

It is urgent, particularly in view of the increasing number of health scares such as Influenza A (H1N1), that the authorities change all manual taps, preferably to auto-sensor ones with a constant flow until the hands are removed.

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