

Sensible advice can go long way in public restrooms



Is the person next to you washing with soap? Simple reminders like that one, hung over the entrance to a public restroom in Britain as part of a study, seem to increase the odds that people will wash their hands with soap and water. Absent such reminders, researchers from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine found that only 65 percent of women and a paltry 31 percent of men used soap. Different messages resonated with men and women, the study — an analysis of almost 200,000 restroom visits over 32 days — found. While women who saw a straightforward reminder like “Wash your hands with soap” were quite likely to comply, men needed a more graphic message: the most effective sign in the men’s room was “Soap it off or eat it later.”

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