

# September 2015

## Boost Your Immune System



- ◆ Your immune system is your protector.
- ◆ Its job is to defend the body against diseases and other damaging foreign bodies.
- ◆ Just like other body systems, it's important to keep the immune system strong.

### Did you know?

**200,000** Americans are hospitalized each year because of flu complications.

### Did you know?

Only **51%** of Americans wash their hands after sneezing or coughing.

### Did you know?

Germs from a sneeze or cough can carry up to **3 feet**.



# What Germ “Hot Spots” Are You Living With?

Door handles are one of the most common places that harbor harmful germs and bacteria, thus causing infections to spread.

45% of sinks tested were positive for coliform bacteria, while 27% contained molds.

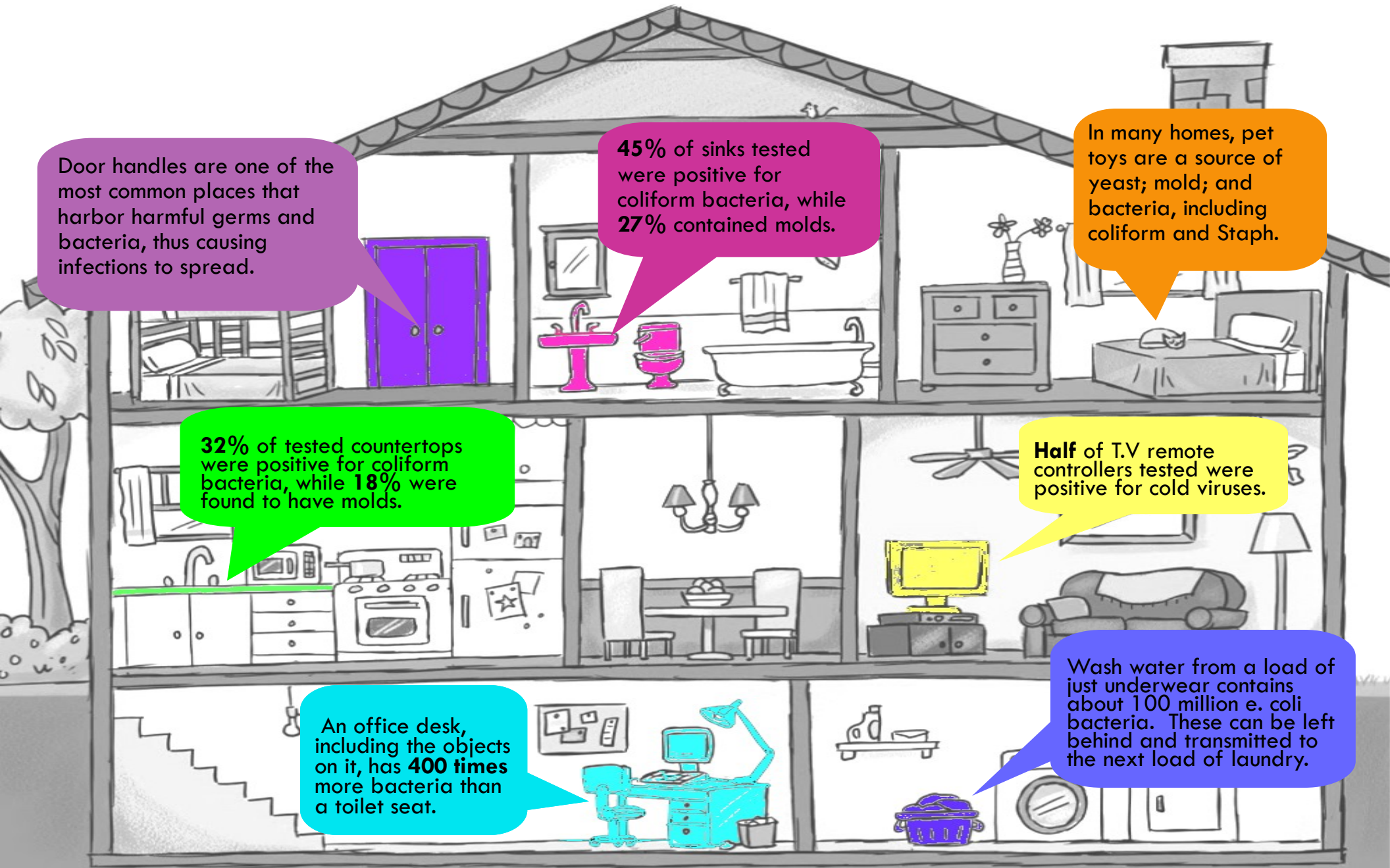
In many homes, pet toys are a source of yeast; mold; and bacteria, including coliform and Staph.

32% of tested countertops were positive for coliform bacteria, while 18% were found to have molds.

Half of T.V remote controllers tested were positive for cold viruses.

An office desk, including the objects on it, has 400 times more bacteria than a toilet seat.

Wash water from a load of just underwear contains about 100 million e. coli bacteria. These can be left behind and transmitted to the next load of laundry.



# What Are You Doing To Increase Your Immunity and Decrease Your Risk?

## Practice stress management.

Stress hormones suppress and weaken the immune system.



## Get enough sleep.

Lack of sleep decreases production of immune system cells.



## Avoid sugar.

Excess sugar depresses immune function.



## Avoid sharing:

towels, face cloths or towels, dishes, utensils, or toys when someone is sick.



## Exercise:

- It flushes bacteria out of the lungs.
- It raises body temperature which may prevent bacterial growth.
- It slows down the release of stress-related hormones.



## Eat a rainbow...of fruits and vegetables:

- Red and pink produce is high in Vitamin C. Try tomatoes, strawberries, or pink grapefruit.
- Orange produce provides beta carotene which is turned into Vitamin A. Try carrots or squash.
- Dark green produce contains beta carotene and Vitamin E which protects against colds and the flu. Try kale or spinach.



## Get the flu shot:

- The flu vaccine teaches your immune system to recognize that virus as a threat. Antibodies are made to fight it in the future.
- Some people experience flu symptoms after being vaccinated, but it's not because of the vaccine. Flu-like symptoms afterwards may be a side effect of the body making antibodies.
- It takes 2 weeks for the flu shot to take full effect, so a person is still at risk for catching the flu during this timeframe.

