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# Brush Off

TWO TOOLS TO KEEP YOUR KISSER CLEANER GO HEAD-TO-HEAD

The next time you reach for your toothbrush, remember: Each toilet flush sends millions of contaminated water droplets into the air and onto faucet handles and countertops. As many as 1,000 pathogens have been identified in bathrooms (where they thrive thanks to heat and moisture), and they can come into contact with your Oral-B, says R. Tom Glass, professor of pathology and dental medicine at Oklahoma State University, in Tulsa. Machines for disinfecting toothbrushes used to be bulky and slow. This generation is quicker, easier to use, and won't clean out your wallet. —JEREMY QUITNER

NEWS  
CULTURE  
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## Violight Toothbrush Sanitizer

\$49.95, violight.com.

**METHOD** Germicidal ultraviolet light is flashed at the head of the toothbrush for 10 minutes at a frequency high enough to damage the DNA of microorganisms, rendering them unable to reproduce.

**KILL RATE** Greater than 99 percent for the five most common bacteria and one yeast, according to independent lab tests.

**CAPACITY** Four manual or electric brushes.

**PRO** Slick look, courtesy of designer Philippe Starck. Translucent top glows cool purple when the unit is running.

**CON** Only heads are sanitized, not handles, which remain exposed. Light bulb wears out after about one year. (Replacements cost \$14.95 each.)

**LOWDOWN** "UV light is a healthy way to sterilize," says Glass. The light penetrates all areas of the brush head without using chemicals or water. The design is compact, and the cleaning action is silent.

## Germ Terminator GT100

\$59.95, 800-247-1000, germterminator.com.

**METHOD** The toothbrush is bathed in steam for 10 minutes, then subjected to continuous dry heat as long as the unit remains plugged in.

**KILL RATE** Independent lab tests show 99.9 percent for 12 of the most common bacteria and viruses.

**CAPACITY** Two brushes, manual or electric.

**PRO** Sanitizes bristles and handles (unless your brush is electric, in which case only the heads will fit). Clear shell protects brushes between uses.

**CON** A thing not so much of beauty as utility. Makes gurgling noises while steaming. Using distilled water is recommended.

**LOWDOWN** "Steam is very effective at killing germs," says Charles Gerba, professor of microbiology at the University of Arizona, in Tucson. The dry-heat cycle removes any lingering water, making the Germ Terminator a safe place to store your brush.



CARGO

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