

# Uncovering myths about **health** and **hygiene**

As a leading global hygiene and health company, we continuously gather insights that help us break barriers to well-being and contribute to inclusive, stigma-free societies.



**15** countries

**15 000** people

In this year's global web survey, we surveyed how more than 15,000 people in 15 different countries view **the future of well-being**. In order to identify the knowledge gaps, we asked the respondents about **common health and hygiene myths**. Continue reading to find out if you know more about hand hygiene, menstruation, menopause, incontinence, and lymphedema than the people we surveyed!

1



STATEMENT:

Drying your hands with **paper towels** after washing is better than using an air dryer.

This statement is true. Jet air dryers spread 10x more bacteria and compared to paper hand towels produce more airborne droplets, increasing the risk of bacteria spread. **More than half (57%)** of respondents answered wrong or "don't know" on this statement.

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2



STATEMENT:

The only cure for **incontinence** is surgery.

This statement is false. Incontinence can be treated, sometimes cured, and always managed. Personalized care should aim to maintain or restore continence or manage incontinence with purpose made product. **More than half (55%)** answered wrong or "don't know" on this statement.

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3



STATEMENT:

Wearing **medical gloves** decreases the need for hand hygiene at hospitals.

This statement is false. Today, healthcare associated infections (HAIs) are still a significant problem for hospitals and healthcare institutions. According to WHO, the most effective way to combat HAIs is by practicing hand hygiene. Using medical gloves does not eliminate the need for hand hygiene amongst professionals. Instead proper use of medical gloves, combined with proper hand hygiene, is an evidence-based measure to protect against HAIs. More than **2 in 5 (44%)** answered wrong or "don't know" on this statement.

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4



STATEMENT:

Women do not get pregnant once they reach **menopause**.

This statement is **false**. A woman's fertile period lasts approximately from 16 to 35 years of age. From this age onwards and especially from the age of forty, a woman's fertility progressively declines until the complete depletion of the egg reserve at menopause, meaning that it is no longer possible for her to become pregnant naturally. However, it is still possible for postmenopausal women to become pregnant by IVF, either by using eggs they have frozen earlier in life, or by using fresh or frozen donor eggs. More than **3 in 4 (77%)** answered wrong or "don't know" on this statement.

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5



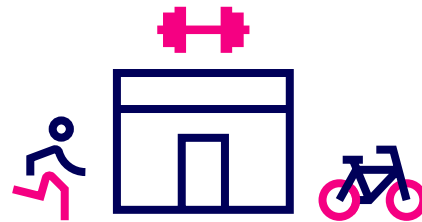
STATEMENT:

Maintaining a healthy weight can lower your risk of **lymphedema**.

This statement is true. Eating healthy and especially maintaining a healthy weight can lower your risk of lymphedema or help to prevent your lymphedema from progressing. **More than 2 in 5 (44%)** answered wrong or "don't know" on this statement.

[Essity source](#) [External source 1](#) [External source 2](#)

6



STATEMENT:

Being active when **menstruating** can relieve pain.

This statement is true. Exercise improves blood circulation in the pelvic area, meaning less menstrual pain. Physical activity will also make you feel better overall, as exercise stimulates endorphin production in your body, which not only relieve the symptoms of PMS, but they also improve your sleep too. **More than half (54%)** of respondents answered wrong or "don't know" on this statement.

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