

NED UNIVERSITY JOURNAL OF RESEARCH

MOBILE PHONES: RESERVOIR OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN UNIVERSITY PREMISES

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Volume: **IX**

No: **1**

Pages: **35-43**

Date: **June 2012**



Abstract:

The objective of this study is to find out the level of contamination of mobile phones used in University premises. These mobile phones could be a reservoir of pathogenic microorganisms and can also contribute in spread of infectious diseases among the users in different environments. During this study, 367 mobile phones of teachers, students, non-teaching staff, medical staff and canteen staff of the University were screened in order to check the presence of different microorganisms including normal flora and pathogenic species. Isolated bacterial species were identified by the standard microbiological methods and biochemical tests. Eight different commonly used disinfectants were tested by Agar Well Diffusion method to find out the effective disinfectant for the cleaning of mobile phones. 98.6% of the total mobile phones were contaminated with bacteria. Overall, 250 (69.0%) samples were contaminated with different members of coliforms group of bacteria. 5% Acetic acid solution and Dettol (4.8% Chloroxylenol) were found to be active disinfectants against bacterial isolates. Presence of coliforms and other pathogens on mobile phones indicates the potential unhygienic conditions in university staff and students. Incidences of infectious diseases are greater in those people who use mobile phones for more than two hours per day. This is an alarming situation which can result in outbreak of diseases in university premises.

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