



World Music Drumming **Transforming Lives . . . Building Community**

Disinfecting Drums

by World Music Drumming Teaching Staff

We regularly get questions about how to disinfect the drumheads on the REMO drums. So, I put the question to our esteemed teaching staff from the summer workshops, and here is what they said:

In a message dated 11/18/05 7:25:52 AM, james.mader@browardschools.com writes:

I have had serious problems with an assistant to the ESE students using alcohol to wipe down the heads. I can not scientifically prove that the alcohol contributed to the heads separating, but I have my suspicions. About three days of the wiping down with alcohol the bubbles started on the heads. So, alcohol on the head could be bad. I have had NO problem with germ transfer. Meaning no correlation to one students being sick and passing the illness through the drum. Of course simply wiping them with a cloth with a little disinfectant is good if there is bodily fluid (blood, snot, spit, etc.) is appropriate. Most of My students ask to wash their hands if THEY wish before or after class. I have a sink in my room. But that is unsolicited. I don't really talk about how germs are spread in my class. Of course if I see a student wiping his/her nose with their hand I ask them to wash their hands and I give them napkins or tissues. I always think of the drumheads as being germ spreaders the same as door knobs, car door handles, chairs, desks, ticket stubs from movies theaters, cafeteria trays, public water fountains, sodas from vending machines, books from the library, any item from a grocery store, monetary change given from a store, using a friends computer key pad or school computer key pads, counter tops at a place of business. I mean, think of all the germs that attach themselves as you drive down the road. I am getting sick as I think of that. I gotta go take a shower with disinfectant. (hee, hee) I guess all I am trying to say is that I really haven't experienced any negativity as far as flu or cold spreading (the drums being responsible) in the 9 years I have done the drumming in 5 classes a day, 5 days a week, all year long.

James Mader, FL

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In a message dated 11/18/05 8:19:29 AM, peacseekr@cox.net writes:

I'm with James....now I don't know where the kids' colds originate, but every child with a cold, who plays the drums, always feels better afterwards...hmmm....so maybe the drum, itself, is the disinfectant. Maybe they get colds from sitting in their desks, listening to teachers talk. To disinfect the disinfectant itself...musical blasphemy.

Seriously? Have the teacher get a flu shot. Kids get what they get, regardless of supplies.

Anne Fennell, CA

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In a message dated 11/20/05 4:01:30 PM, Musithang writes:

I never use anything to disinfect a drum. I have had a child pee on one and another puke on one. In those extreme cases, our custodian used an industry standard disinfectant. Didn't seem to hurt the drum.

I would suggest using soap and water. Maybe a handi-wipe that doesn't have a lot of "great smelling" additives.

Paul Corbiere, FL

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In a message dated 11/21/05 7:26:52 AM, mjerz@dce.k12.wi.us writes:

At the risk of being really redundant here I'll have to share that I too don't get all hyper about germ sharing. I did discuss it with my fifth graders and we decided that while it would be nice to have a germ free environment, it just isn't going to happen. Taking it a step further, would that mean that every time we use the books we sterilize them? Tambourines, triangles, etc.? I sterilize the recorders and that's about it.

We should be proud of the job we do building immunities to germs.....

Margaret A. Jerz, WI

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In a message dated 11/21/05 9:21:39 AM, nthill@mac.com writes:

Here is my two cents. I don't do anything to the drums unless I have incidents like Paul's. Even in middle school we have accidents like that ! I do however provide hand sanitizer for those students that want it. It sits in front of my room. I haven't had any complaints and I very seldom get sick so I guess it must be okay.

Nellie Hill, MD

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