

# Technical Bulletin

## **Battling Germs That Keep Getting Stronger**

(CBC News)

***99% may be a great mark in school, but it's a failing grade in Infection Control!***

*Battling Germs That Keep Getting Stronger*, an article appearing on [www.cbc.ca](http://www.cbc.ca), highlights the emergence of antibiotic resistant organisms (AROs) in healthcare and the community and the potential role certain antibacterial products play in the development of such resistance.

Antibacterial wipes are ubiquitous in today's home, workplace and public areas. They have become a quick and convenient means to protect oneself from picking up germs from a surface. By and large, their usage has come to replace good cleaning standards or practices. However, researchers are now suggesting that certain antibacterial products are not truly effective at killing sufficient levels of bacteria on the surface. Typically, these products exhibit limited germicidal efficacy – 99% bacterial kill vs. hospital grade disinfection of 99.9999% - in long, unrealistic contact times (ie. 10 mins). While the mechanical action used to wipe the surface will remove some bacteria, a significant number of organisms are left behind to survive, proliferate and potentially evolve to become resistant to the antibacterial active ingredient. Quite often this ingredient is triclosan, a weak antibacterial agent.

The key to mitigate this risk is to utilize effective disinfectants in situations that require them, or good mechanical cleaning in lower risk environments. Disinfectants that achieve effective bactericidal efficacy in a rapid and realistic contact time, while not leaving an active residual on the surface after application, will remove the opportunity for any bacteria to develop resistance to them. Likewise, good effective cleaning with soap and water will often achieve the same reduction of bacteria on the surface as weak antibacterial products, without creating the potential for resistance development.

For the original CBC article, please refer to this link:

<http://www.cbc.ca/health/story/2009/02/12/f-superbugs.html>

