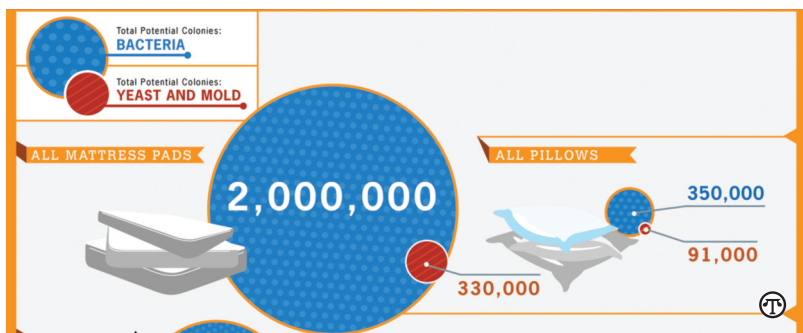


College Beds: A Petri Dish Of Microscopic Mischief



A recent study on dorm room bedding reveals a petri dish of microscopic mischief, including 2 million potential bacteria colonies found on mattress pads.

(NAPSA)—The findings of a recent study on dorm room bedding may soon have college students pulling all-nighters—just to avoid going to bed. It revealed a veritable petri dish of microscopic mischief: hundreds of thousands of bacteria, yeast, fungi and mold colonies partying atop college students’ beds.

According to the SleepBetter.org Investigates: Fungus Among Us study, on average, pillows had 350,000 potential live bacteria colonies and 91,000 potential live yeast and mold colonies. The mattress pads were even nastier—with 2 million potential bacteria colonies and 330,000 yeast and mold colonies on average.

According to Dr. Lisa Shives, a physician who specializes in sleep medicine, “These high levels of bacteria, yeast and mold mean that students’ pillows and mattress pads are reservoirs for vast colonies of nasty microbes. Given the potential health issues associated with these microorganisms, this study should serve as a wake-up call for anyone with old bedding, whether or not in college, to throw them out.”

Men’s pillows were statistically almost twice as microbe infested as women’s—480,000 potential bacteria counts vs. 290,000, respectively. However, the worst offending bedding belonged to a female college senior, whose pillow

contained a teeming reservoir of 170 million potential bacteria counts and nearly 40 million potential yeast and mold counts.

The study identified a “who’s who” of microorganisms, such as *Shigella*, a food poison that causes dysentery; *Moraxella catarrhalis*, which can cause bronchitis, sinusitis and laryngitis; and *Cladosporium* molds, which can cause skin lesions, keratitis, nail fungus, sinusitis, asthma and pulmonary infections.

A related survey about students’ sleep habits and bedding found that 41 percent of college students never washed their pillows and 43 percent never washed their mattress pads. Forty-six percent of those polled said they washed their bed linens once a month while 45 percent said they wash their clothes after each use.

“Just as sleep is a critical component of success in college, so is keeping healthy,” said Dan Schechter, vice president of consumer products at Carpenter Co., a leader in comfort cushioning products, as well as creator of SleepBetter.org. “As this study and survey make clear, students can be doing much more to improve the amount and quality of sleep they are getting each night.”

For more information, visit www.sleepbetter.org.