



How to Clean a Loofah or Natural Sponge

Two Methods: [Maintaining and Sanitizing Your Loofah Regularly](#) [Replacing Your Loofah](#)

A loofah, also known as a sponge, is used for exfoliating dead skin and as a general-purpose sponge for personal hygiene. There are natural loofahs, which come from the fibrous skeleton of the loofah fruit, and loofahs made from plastic and synthetic material. Over time, a loofah's tiny nooks and crannies are filled with nasty bacteria and fungus. That's why it's important to keep your loofah sanitary so it remains safe to use.

Method
1

Maintaining and Sanitizing Your Loofah Regularly

- 1 Keep it dry.** Bacteria loves growing in wet places, so keep your loofah dry to prevent it from becoming a breeding ground for nasty germs that cause folliculitis, yeast, and fungal infections. ^[1]You need to first rinse your loofah thoroughly after each use, and then store it in a cool, dry place.
- 2 Disinfect it.** Loofahs start out hygienic, but the accumulation of dead skin cells and storage in humid environments turns it into a bacteria haven. Soak your loofah in diluted bleach for five minutes each week to kill bacteria and germs. ^[2]
- 3 Use essential natural oils.** Essential oils have antimicrobial properties that help deter bacterial growth. They also contain no irritants or harsh chemicals, which is good for both your skin and the environment. ^[3]
 - On a weekly basis, soak your loofah in a solution made up of warm water and a few drops of pure essential oils. You can purchase essential oils from most health food stores.
- 4 Microwave it to kill the germs.** Your microwave is a powerful weapon in killing germs and infection causing bacteria. You can occasionally microwave synthetic loofahs for two minutes to decontaminate it.
 - Before placing the loofah in microwave, make sure it is completely wet and does not contain any metal parts to avoid the risk of fire. ^[4]
- 5 Wash your loofah in the washing machine.** Go ahead and give your loofah a spin in your washing machine! You should wash it every week in cold water using a mild or gentle cycle. Do not put the sponge in the dryer as the natural fibers will melt. ^[5]

Method
2

Replacing Your Loofah

- 1 Know when it's time to throw it away.** Avoid becoming so attached to your loofah that you keep it around when it's no longer safe to use. Discard your loofah if you notice mold growth or if it smells mildewy or musty. Doing so will help prevent you from catching a nasty skin infection.
- 2 Decide on whether to purchase a natural or synthetic loofah.** There are many different natural and synthetic loofah products on the market. Be aware that loofahs made from natural substances do not last as long as those used in synthetic sponges. Synthetic sponges will last longer on average and require less maintenance.
 - If you buy a natural loofah, you will need to replace it every three to four weeks. Plastic and synthetic loofahs can be kept for two months. ^[6]
- 3 Consider an alternative to a loofah.** Loofahs are a favorite bath and shower accessory for many people. However, because of all the nooks and crannies in a loofah, it is very susceptible in breeding bacteria. Therefore,

you might want to consider ditching the use of loofahs for a more sanitary alternative.

- Washcloths tend to be used more frequently and easier to wash and dry. In addition they accumulate less bacteria due to their physical structure.^[7]If you can't bare to part with your loofah, then alternate days between using a washcloth and a loofah.

Sources and Citations

1. <http://www.drbaileyskincare.com/blog/tips-to-prevent-skin-infections-from-your-shower-sponge-and-razor/>
2. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/29/loofah-clean-healthy_n_5613734.html
3. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/07/31/loofah-bacteria_n_4330801.html

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