



A Performance Evaluation of the Lifestraw: A Personal Point of Use Water Purifier for the Developing World

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18% of people worldwide have no access to safe drinking water. Many household water purifiers have been documented to improve water quality and reduce diarrheal disease. One of these technologies is the LifeStraw, a low-cost, portable, point-of-use water purifier. The LifeStraw has been used worldwide to date, however, there is not yet conclusive research about the performance of the LifeStraws ability to improve drinking water or reduce diarrheal disease burden. The purpose of this research was three-fold: to examine the microbiological capability selected LifeStraw models, to assess their life span in regards to clogging, and to ensure that disinfectant concentrations present in the effluent were below target levels. LifeStraw models tested achieved reductions of bacteria above the target of 99.9999%. Evidence suggests only moderate reductions of viruses, 90-99%. Results from this research suggest that the LifeStraw may be an effective way to improve water quality and reduce diarrheal disease from waterborne, bacterial and viral pathogens.

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