

# Dorms needn't be 'germ zones'

By Lindsay Marshall  
Democrat writer

With school starting in less than four weeks, college students will soon be shopping for dorm-room supplies. Eco-friendly interior designer Robin Wilson believes healthy options should be included in every student's shopping list, and that doing so is affordable.

Wilson is an ambassador to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America and the president of Robin Wilson Home, a company she founded in 2000 for clean construction.

"I suffer from asthma and allergies so I grew up wheezing and sneezing inside and outside," Wilson said.

For this reason, she decided to help create cleaner environments for others, and her line of hypoallergenic bedding will be sold at Bed Bath & Beyond this fall.

"I needed to make something that was both affordable and good for my new baby," Wilson said. "Sometimes things with the hypoallergenic label are too expensive. We wanted to put something out there that was affordable and yet great quality."

Dr. Celeste Paquette, at Florida State University's Wellness Center, says about 50 percent of patients seen at the center could have easily prevented their ailments, whether it was from drinking out of someone else's cup or touching their faces after coming in contact with germs.

"Germs love wet things like sinks," Paquette said. "Students should clean their bathrooms and showers once a week with antiseptic or Lysol."

Some healthy options Wilson recommends buying for dorm rooms include Clorox Disinfecting Wipes, Steripod Toothbrush Sanitizer, hypoallergenic bedding, Method All-Purpose Cleaner with Powergreen Technology, Purell Hand Sanitizer, an air purifier with HEPA filter and a Klean Kanteen water bottle. Of these, she says the most important for students are the toothbrush sanitizer, bedding and water bottle.

"With the Steripod, if your toothbrush is exposed and other people are washing their hands, their dirty water is hitting your toothbrush," Wilson said. "It's also safe for transporting because if it hits the floor, the plastic Steripod is what hits the floor. They're \$3 for two."

Paquette adds to Wilson's bathroom tips that flip flops should be worn in the shower and towels should be left out to dry completely.

"Mold may accumulate on damp clothes sitting on the floor," Paquette said.

Paquette also says that students should be sure to get enough sleep because not doing so can suppress immune systems. Wilson believes that hypoallergenic bedding can further prevent sickness.

"You spend a third of your life sleeping, so you need a clean place to sleep," Wilson said. "You don't want to put your head on something toxic."



A trio of FAMU students team up to move into their FAMU dorm last August. As parents and students start gearing up for "Move In" day 2013, keep in mind that dorm rooms don't have to be germ zones. MIKE EVEN/DEMOCRAT FILES