

Patient Safety Initiatives



HAND HYGIENE

Hand hygiene refers to the action of cleaning your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. It is a simple habit, something most people do without thinking and, when done properly, is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of disease.

When Should You Wash Your Hands?

Although it is impossible to keep your hands completely germ-free, there are times when it's very important to perform hand hygiene. These include before and after eating, preparing food and caring for others. Hands should also be washed whenever visibly soiled and after toileting, blowing your nose or sneezing and handling pets.

What Should You Use for Hand Hygiene?

The following are two methods which are acceptable for performing hand hygiene:

Alcohol-based hand rub
(recommended method when hands are not visibly soiled)

Soap and running water

How to handrub

1 Rub hands for 15 seconds

- Apply 1 to 2 pumps of product to palms of dry hands.
- Rub hands together, palm to palm.
- Rub in between and around fingers.
- Rub back of each hand with palm of other hand.

2 Rub hands for 15 seconds

- Rub fingertips of each hand in opposite palm.
- Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand.
- Rub hands until product is dry. Do not use paper towels.
- Once dry, your hands are safe.

JUST CLEAN YOUR HANDS

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How to handwash

1 Lather hands for 15 seconds

- Wet hands with warm water.
- Apply soap.
- Lather soap and rub hands palm to palm.
- Rub in between and around fingers.

2 Lather hands for 15 seconds

- Rub back of each hand with palm of other hand.
- Rub fingertips of each hand in opposite palm.
- Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand.
- Rinse thoroughly under running water.

- Pat hands dry with paper towel.
- Turn off water using paper towel.
- Your hands are now safe.

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How We Are Promoting Hand Hygiene

- Active participation in the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's "*Just Clean Your Hands*" Campaign
- Increase in the number of wall-mounted alcohol-based hand rub stations throughout our hospitals to be more accessible at point-of-care.
- Hand cream stations have been installed to promote/protect hand and skin integrity of healthcare providers
- On-going observational audits to monitor compliance with hand hygiene
- A hand hygiene e-learning module has been initiated and is mandatory for all healthcare providers to complete.