

CDC cites five common household scenarios in which disease-causing germs can be transmitted by contaminated hands: Hands to food, infected infant to hands of other children, food to hands to food, nose, mouth or eyes to hands of others, food to hands of infants.

In the healthcare setting, handwashing can prevent potentially fatal infections from spreading from patient to patient, and from patient to healthcare worker and vice-versa. In the home, it can prevent infectious diseases such as diarrhea and hepatitis from spreading from family member to family member and, sometimes, throughout a community.

The information provided in this brochure is only a guideline. Accuracy and completeness are not guaranteed. While some of the information is about medical issues, it is not intended as a substitute for professional health care. The brochure is not designed to offer medical or legal advice. Please consult a doctor for medical advice and an attorney for legal advice.

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Safe Handwashing Procedures



When to Wash

Handwashing is the most effective means of preventing the spread of pathogenic microorganisms (bacteria and viruses) to avoid transmitting illnesses to patients and workers. Plain soap does not remove microorganisms, however antiseptic or antimicrobial soaps increase the ability to kill germs.

When to wash:

- ◆ Before work,
- ◆ After using the bathroom,
- ◆ After contact with bodily fluids or secretions,
- ◆ Before examining a patient,
- ◆ After sneezing or coughing or using a Kleenex,
- ◆ After smoking,
- ◆ Before eating, handling or preparing food,
- ◆ After touching raw meat, poultry, fish or eggs,
- ◆ After eating and drinking,
- ◆ After touching an animal or pet,
- ◆ After touching a contaminated object: trash, cleaning rag, dirty diaper, or toy,
- ◆ After direct contact patient's skin,
- ◆ After removing gloves,



Handwashing Procedures

Follow these steps to keep hands clean.

- ◆ Sinks can be contaminated with germs and pathogens, avoid touching the sink,
- ◆ Turn water on with paper towel,
- ◆ Wet your hands and wrists with warm running water,
- ◆ Add soap, vigorously rub hands together into a lather, Wash for at least twenty seconds outside the running water. Remember to wash around rings, under fingernails, around cuticles and between fingers. Wash the front and back of your hands,
- ◆ Rinse your hands well under warm running water. Do not use standing water to rinse hands. Hold hands and finger tips down so water runs toward drain and not elbows.
- ◆ Turn off the water with a paper towel and dispose in a proper receptacle,
- ◆ Dry hands thoroughly with a clean paper towel, or cloth towel,
- ◆ Any type of soap may be used, however an antimicrobial soap used in conjunction with a hand sanitizer are the most effective to reduce the pathogenic microorganisms,



- ◆ To prevent chapping use a mild soap with warm water, pat rather than rub hands dry; and apply lotion liberally,
- ◆ Avoid using a common hand towel used by others.

Hand Sanitizer

Hand Sanitizer may contain as much as 60 % to 95 % alcohol and are proven to reduce bacteria counts on the hands.

- ◆ Hand Sanitizer may be applied to clean pre washed hands to disinfect,
- ◆ Alcohol Rub Sanitizer is not appropriate when hands are visibly dirty or soiled,
- ◆ Alcohol Rub Sanitizer can dry hands. The use of lotion or cream will help the dryness,
- ◆ Remember to read the product label for proper use and other important information.

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