

Hand Hygiene

What is hand hygiene?

Hand hygiene means you wash your hands correctly to prevent the spread of germs.

Why is hand hygiene important?

1. Even though your hands look clean, they may still carry germs.
2. If you touch your eyes, nose, or mouth after you get germs on your hands, you may get sick.
3. Hand hygiene helps get rid of germs and prevents illness.
4. Hand hygiene can also prevent you from spreading germs to other people.
5. Germs can spread when you touch someone, or when you touch a surface or object with germs on it.




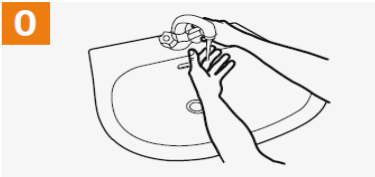
What is the correct way to wash my hands?

1. Wet your hands with warm water and apply soap. Rub the soap over the front and back of your hands, between your fingers, and under your fingernails. Rub your hands together for about 15 to 20 seconds.
2. Rinse your hands well under warm running water. Dry your hands with a clean towel or paper towel. Use the paper towel to turn the faucet off. If you share a bathroom with other people, use the paper towel to open the door when you leave.
3. Hand sanitizer gels and wipes can be used to clean your hands if no water is available. The alcohol in the sanitizer helps to kill germs on your hands. Rub the gel all over your hands until it dries.

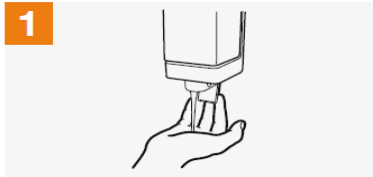


Hand Hygiene Technique with Soap and Water

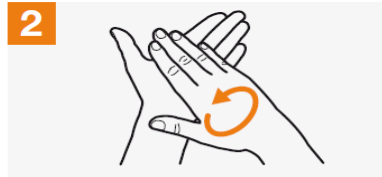
 Duration of the entire procedure: 40-60 seconds



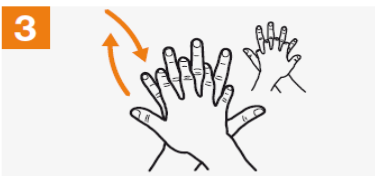
0 Wet hands with water;



1 Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces;



2 Rub hands palm to palm;



3 Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;



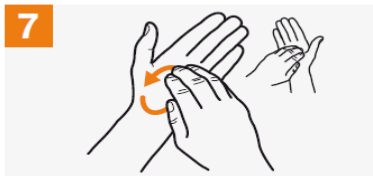
4 Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;



5 Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;



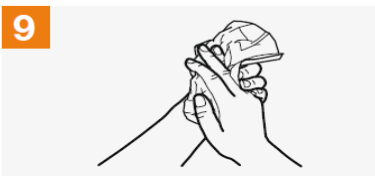
6 Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;



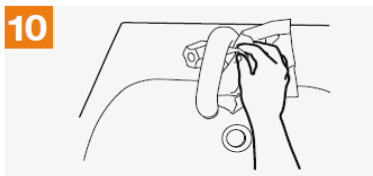
7 Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;



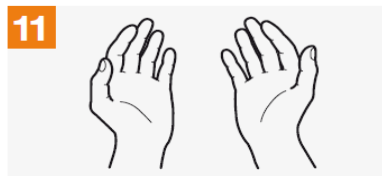
8 Rinse hands with water;



9 Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel;



10 Use towel to turn off faucet;



11 Your hands are now safe.

What should you do if you don't have soap and clean, running water?

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to reduce the number of microbes on them in most situations. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of microbes on hands in some situations, but sanitizers do not eliminate all types of germs.

Hand sanitizers may not be as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.

How do you use hand sanitizers?

- Apply the product to the palm of one hand (read the label to learn the correct amount).
- Rub your hands together.
- Rub the product over all surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry.

When should I wash my hands?

1. Before you prepare, cook, and eat food
2. Before and after caring for someone who is sick
3. Before and after you clean or care for a cut or other wound
4. Before and after you touch another person
5. After you go to the bathroom, help a child go to the bathroom, or change a diaper
6. After you cough, sneeze, or blow your nose
7. After you touch an animal or clean up animal waste
8. After you touch garbage

What else can I do for hand hygiene?

1. Do not cough or sneeze into your hand. Use a tissue when you sneeze. Then throw the tissue away. Cough into the bend of your arm. Teach children not to cough or sneeze into their hands.
2. Teach children how to wash their hands correctly. Put hand soap within easy reach of the sink.
3. Place bar soap in a dish that lets the water drain out. Clean the dish well before you add a new bar of soap.
4. Clean surfaces regularly. Use a single-use sponge or cloth to clean surfaces. If you use a cloth more than once, wash and replace it before you clean again.

Reference:

1. http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2009/9789241597906_eng.pdf
2. Micromedex's Care Note Series
3. <http://www.cdc.gov/features/handwashing/>