

Hand Hygiene Guide

Issued in the Interest of Public Health and Safety

Introduction

Hand hygiene is one of the most effective measures to prevent the spread of infections. Proper hand washing and the use of hand sanitizers significantly reduce the transmission of germs in households, workplaces, schools, and healthcare settings. This guide provides step-by-step instructions for correct hand hygiene practices.

When to Wash Hands

Hands should be cleaned:

- Before and after preparing or eating food
- Before and after caring for children, the elderly, or sick persons
- After using the toilet
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing the nose
- After touching animals or animal waste
- After handling garbage or contaminated items
- After returning from public places or contact with commonly touched surfaces

Steps for Hand Washing with Soap and Water

Duration: At least 20 seconds

1. **Wet Hands:** Place hands under clean, running water (warm or cold).
2. **Apply Soap:** Apply enough soap to cover all surfaces of the hands.
3. **Palm to Palm:** Rub hands together, palm to palm.
4. **Back of Hands:** Rub each palm over the back of the other hand.
5. **Between Fingers:** Interlace fingers and clean between them.
6. **Back of Fingers:** Rub the backs of fingers against the opposite palm.
7. **Thumbs:** Rub each thumb in a circular motion.
8. **Fingertips and Nails:** Rub fingertips and nails against the opposite palm.
9. **Wrists:** Clean both wrists thoroughly.
10. **Rinse:** Rinse hands well under running water.
11. **Dry:** Dry hands using a clean towel, disposable tissue, or air dryer.



How to wash your hands

PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS AGAINST INFECTIONS



WET HANDS



APPLY SOAP



RUB HANDS
PALM TO PALM



LATHER THE BACKS
OF YOUR HANDS



SCRUB BETWEEN
YOUR FINGERS



RUBS THE BACKS OF
FINGERS ON THE
OPPOSING PALMS



CLEAN THUMBS



WASH FINGERNAILS
AND FINGERTIPS



RINSE HANDS



DRY WITH A SINGLE
USE TOWEL



USE THE TOWEL TO
TURN OFF THE FAUCET



YOUR HANDS
ARE CLEAN

Steps for Hand Hygiene with Alcohol-Based Sanitizer

If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer containing at least **60% alcohol**.

1. Apply sufficient sanitizer to cover all hand surfaces.
2. Rub palms together.
3. Rub the back of each hand.
4. Rub between fingers.
5. Rub fingertips and nails on opposite palm.
6. Rub each thumb.
7. Continue rubbing until hands are completely dry (approximately 20 seconds).

Additional Recommendations

- Keep nails short and clean.
- Avoid wearing rings, bracelets, or watches while washing hands, as they may harbor germs.
- Moisturize hands regularly to prevent skin dryness and cracks.

Key Message

Proper hand hygiene is a simple and effective practice that saves lives. Consistent and correct hand washing or sanitizing protects individuals, families, and the community from infections.

“Clean Hands, Safe Health”



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Your guide to health and wellness