

# Hand washing & Infection Control

There are many things we can do to prevent getting sick, getting enough sleep, eating right, exercising, but one simple task—washing our hands — remains the cornerstone of any successful Infection Control Program.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia, we all pick up germs from other sources and then infect ourselves when we touch our eyes, our nose or our mouth. One of the most common ways people catch colds is by rubbing their nose or their eyes after their hands have been contaminated with the cold virus. You can also spread germs directly to others or onto surfaces that other people touch. Before you know it, everyone around you is getting sick.

Hand washing is the single most important procedure for preventing the spread of infection.

You should wash your hands:

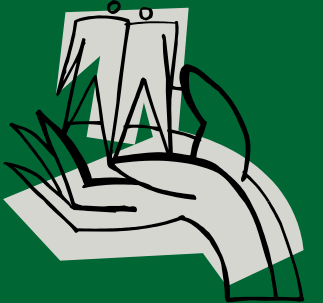
- After using the bathroom.
- Before and after assisting with personal care.
- Before preparing or eating food.
- After handling or touching pets and their cages.
- After blowing your nose, sneezing or coughing.
- Whenever they look soiled.

A waterless antibacterial hand sanitizer may also be used if you're not near a sink. Use a sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Rub the entire surface of your hands, fingers, and wrist with the sanitizer, until dry. It is recommended that you wash with soap and water as soon as possible

Procedures for hand washing:

- Wet your hands with warm water.
- Apply soap (liquid preferred.)
- Rub your hands together for about 20 seconds, working up a lather, get between your fingers and under your fingernails.
- Rinse off soap.
- Dry your hands with disposable paper towels.
- Use the paper towel to turn off the faucet to avoid recontamination.

## Tips for Family Caregivers



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