

Hand Hygiene: Hand Washing & Sanitizing

Hand hygiene is an important step in maintaining your overall health.

Effective hand hygiene, including timely hand washing and using hand sanitizer, helps eliminate harmful germs that can lead to sickness and prevent the spread of germs to others.

When to Wash Your Hands

Always wash your hands before you...

- Consume food
- Prepare food
- Touch or treat a wound
- Provide care for someone who is ill

Always wash your hands after you...

- Prepare food (especially if you are working with raw meat or eggs)
- Use the restroom
- Sneeze, cough or blow your nose
- Touch surfaces or objects that are commonly used by a lot of people
- Provide care for someone who is ill
- Touch an animal or animal waste

Steps for Effective Hand Washing

1. Wet your hands with water.
2. Apply an adequate amount of soap: enough to cover all hand surfaces.
3. Lather soap and scrub hand surfaces for at least 20 seconds. Be sure to include the backs of your hands, the areas between your fingers and under your nails.
4. Rinse the soap off your hands with water.
5. Dry your hands with a paper towel, cloth towel or allow them to air dry.
6. As an extra precaution you can use a paper towel to turn off the faucet and open the door.

Other Types of Hand Hygiene

If running water is not readily available you should use an alcohol-based hand sanitizing product that contains at least 60% alcohol. Apply an adequate amount of the product to all hand surfaces and allow the product to dry.

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