

HAND HYGIENE

It seems simple, but if you discovered that one easy 15-second task, performed several times each day, could help protect your health and spare you from recurrent infections and disease, would you be willing to participate? Good. Wash your hands! Handwashing is the best line of defense against germs that are spread by touching. If you wash your hands often and properly you can help prevent infections in yourself and prevent spreading infections to others.

WHEN TO WASH YOUR HANDS

- when they are dirty
- before preparing food and after handling raw meat, fish, or eggs
- before and after eating, drinking, or smoking
- after sneezing or coughing
- **after engaging in any activity that may contaminate the hands, such as taking out the garbage, handling cleaning chemicals, or picking up dropped items**
- after using the restroom
- after touching human body parts
- after caring for or touching animals or handling animal waste
- **after coming in contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials**

HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS

Unfortunately, it is not good enough just to wash your hands often. You also have to wash your hands the right way. It is the soap and the scrubbing that loosen and remove the microorganisms. Here's how to do it:

- Wet your hands with water (preferably warm, but not hot).
- Put soap on your hands. It is better to use a liquid soap because germs can live on wet bars of soap and in the pools of water in which bar soap may be sitting; however, bar soap is acceptable as long as it is left to dry on a rack between uses.
- Rub your hands together vigorously, creating friction, for at least 15 seconds covering all surfaces of your hands. Wash longer if you can still see dirt on your hands. Make sure that you wash between your fingers, the backs of your hands, your thumbs, and under your fingernails.
- Rinse your hands thoroughly under a stream of running water. Make sure that you rinse between your fingers and under rings.
- Use a paper towel to pat your hands dry (germs can live in wet cloth towels). (Note: If you have to touch a container or a knob to get the towel out, do it before you wash your hands.)
- Use the towel to turn off the water. If you touch the water faucet after you wash your hands, you may get germs on your fingers again.
- If there is a blow dryer for your hands, push the button with your elbow.



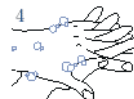
1
Wet hands and wrists.



2
Use a sufficient amount of soap.



3
Lather soap and scrub hands well, palm to palm.



4
Scrub in between and around fingers.



5
Scrub back of each hand with palm of other hand.



6
Scrub fingertips of each hand in opposite palm.



7
Scrub each thumb clasped in opposite hand.



8
Scrub each wrist clasped in opposite hand.



9
Rinse thoroughly under running water.



10
Wipe and dry hands well with paper towel.



11
Turn off water using paper towel.

Be a
Germ-Buster...
Wash your Hands!

GLOVES AND HANDWASHING

The use of gloves does not eliminate the need for hand hygiene. Likewise, the use of hand hygiene does not eliminate the need for gloves. Research has shown that the use of gloves reduces hand contamination by only 70 to 80 percent, and that gloves sometimes create a false sense of security for workers. In fact, dirty gloves, like dirty hands, are contaminated and may transmit germs.

- Single-use gloves should never be washed; they should always be thrown away when they need to be changed.
- Non-disposable (rubber) gloves should be washed with soap as frequently as bare hands. Use a disinfectant to wash rubber gloves if a possible exposure to blood/bodily fluids/solids occurred.

DEPARTMENT STANDARDS FOR HAND HYGIENE

- **Employees must be instructed in hand hygiene.**
- **Hand soap must be available or provided for all employees in restrooms and/or in vehicles.**
- **Employees must wash their hands every time they remove their gloves when handling chemicals or removing blood and bodily fluids/solids.**

NO EXCEPTIONS!

OSHA REQUIREMENTS

OSHA requires employers to:

1. Provide handwashing facilities which are readily accessible to employees. As defined by OSHA, the term "handwashing facility" means "a facility providing either a basin, container, or outlet with an adequate supply of potable water, soap, and single-use towels."
2. Ensure that employees wash their hands and any other skin with soap and water, or flush mucous membranes with water, immediately or as soon as feasible following contact of such body areas with blood or other potentially infectious materials.
3. Ensure that employees wash their hands immediately or as soon as feasible after removal of gloves or other personal protective equipment.

OSHA REFERENCE

California Code of Regulations, Title 8

Subchapter 7 – General Industry Safety Orders, Group 2 – Safe Practices and Personal Protection

Article 9 – Sanitation, Section 3366 – Washing Facilities (<http://www.dir.ca.gov/title8/3366.html>)

This information was compiled from a variety of sources by the San Diego Park and Recreation Department Training Office. Supervisors should post this information or otherwise ensure that their employees receive Hand Hygiene training appropriate to their work assignment. Please call the Training Office if you have any questions, 619/52-58245.

