



Routine Practices In the Workplace

May 11, 2009

There are a few simple steps you can take to stop the spread of germs that make you and others sick

How are viruses spread?

Viruses such as seasonal influenza are spread - person to person mainly by "droplet spread." This happens when droplets from a cough or sneeze are released into the air and then are breathed in by others less than 2 meters (6ft) away. The virus can also be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets on another person or an object and then touches their own eyes, mouth or nose before washing their hands.

To help stop the spread of germs:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.
- Place your used tissue in a waste basket.

Clean your hands after coughing or sneezing with:

- Soap and water.
OR
- Alcohol-based hands rub (at least 60% alcohol content).

Hand hygiene is the most effective way to prevent the spread of germs from one person to another

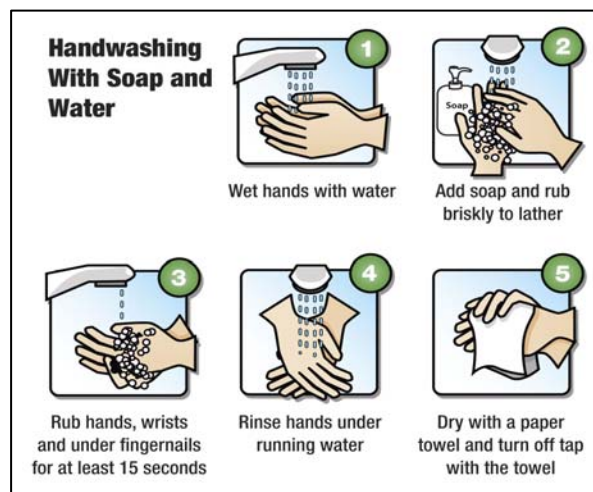
What Is Hand Hygiene?

Hand hygiene refers to removing or killing germs on the hands as well as maintaining good skin integrity. There are two methods of removing/killing germs on hands: washing with soap and running water for a minimum of 15 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand rub.

When Is Hand Hygiene Important?

Always wash your hands thoroughly:

- Before preparing or eating foods.
- Before and after providing first aid.
- After coming in contact with someone who is sick.
- After using the washroom
- After changing diapers.
- After handling blood or body fluids whether or not gloves are worn.
- After handling items soiled with blood or body fluids.
- After you cough or sneeze.
- After you use a tissue to wipe your nose.
- After gloves are removed.



When Should A Hand Sanitizer Be Used?

When hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand rubs are the preferred method for cleaning hands. Alcohol-based hand rubs should have a minimum alcohol content of 60%.

Alcohol hand sanitizers kill the germs on hands, including transient illness-causing bacteria that are picked up off doorknobs, light switches and others surfaces that hands come into contact with. The effectiveness of the sanitizers depends on the amount and type of alcohol used.

Hand washing with soap and running water for 15 seconds must be done when hands are visibly dirty.

How Can I Protect Myself and others?

Protecting yourself involves some common sense practices.

- Keep your hands clean by washing thoroughly with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Practice proper respiratory etiquette such as coughing/sneezing into the inside elbow or using a disposable tissue followed by hand hygiene.
- Stay home if you are ill. Staying home will help prevent the spread of infections to co-workers and the general public.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as toothbrushes, razors, towels, nail files, water bottles, and chap sticks.
- Frequently clean common surfaces such as telephones, desks, keyboards, doorknobs, countertops, etc.

Use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol or wash with soap and running water for at least 15 seconds when hands are visibly dirty.

