



## Routine Practices

### What Are Routine Practices?

Routine Practices are methods used regularly to protect ourselves and others when there is potential to come in contact with blood or body fluids from others. We cannot always tell if a person has an infection so we **must treat all blood and body fluids as potentially infectious**.

Body fluids can include feces, urine, vomitus, nasal secretions, sputum, and saliva, whether or not they contain visible blood. Additional precautions beyond routine practices may need to be used with certain fluids.

**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 liquid 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.
- After using the washroom.
- After you cough or sneeze.
- After you use a tissue to wipe your nose.
- Before and after providing first aid.
- After coming in contact with someone who is sick.
- 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 gloves are removed.

### Types of Soap

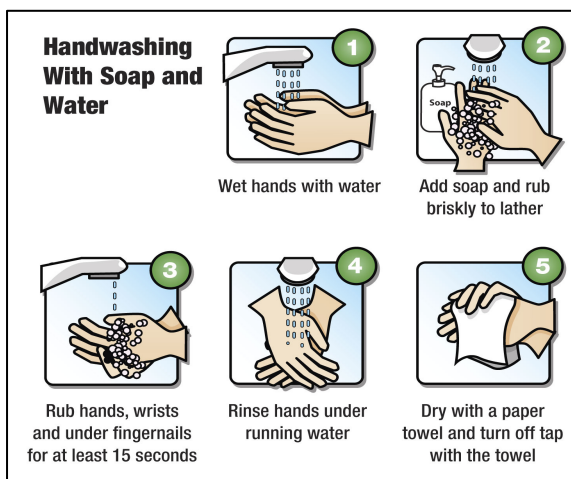
Plain soaps act on hands by lifting dirt and debris which are then flushed away with water. The physical action of scrubbing and rinsing is important to remove germs. Antimicrobial soaps are not recommended in non-healthcare settings.

### 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-based hand rubs (ABHRs) kill the germs on hands, including temporary illness-causing bacteria that are picked up off doorknobs, light switches and others surfaces that hands come into contact with. ABHRs should never be refilled or topped up.

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



Call the Communicable Disease Team: ext. 8809



Tel: 721-7520  
Toll free: 1-877-721-7520  
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Your Health Connection

### **Skin Care**

Intact skin is the first line of defence, therefore careful attention to skin care is an essential part of the hand hygiene program. If integrity of skin is an issue, the individual should be referred to a doctor for assessment. Hand lotion prevents drying and cracked skin. Pump-type containers are recommended. If containers are reused, the containers and the pumps should be washed and dried before refilling.

**Use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol or wash with liquid soap and running water for at least 15 seconds when hands are visibly dirty.**



### **How Can I Protect Myself and Others?**

Preventing the spread of germs involves some common sense practices:

- Practice proper respiratory etiquette such as using a disposable tissue or coughing/sneezing into the inside elbow followed by hand hygiene.
- Ensure your vaccinations are up to date.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Always treat blood and body fluids as possibly infectious.
- Never share personal items such as toothbrushes, razors, nail files, water bottles, and chap sticks since they may pass on small amounts of blood/saliva from one person to another.
- Dispose of razors carefully.
- Never re-cap, bend or break-off used needles.
- Place needles and syringes in a puncture-proof container with a lid.
- If you have a needle stick injury, immediately seek medical attention.
- Wear latex, vinyl or rubber disposable gloves when handling blood, body fluids, cleaning cuts or scrapes, and when cleaning blood spills.
- Wash hands after removing gloves and discard the gloves in a plastic bag.
- Clean up spills promptly using a disposable absorbent cloth (i.e. paper towel) first, then disinfect the area thoroughly (i.e. freshly mixed one part bleach to nine parts of water with a contact time of at least 10 minutes).
- Gowns, aprons, masks, protective eyewear and face shields should be worn when procedures may generate splashes of blood or body fluids.
- Handle blood-soiled articles from other people cautiously.
- Teach children never to touch needles, syringes or condoms and to tell an adult immediately.