

HAND HYGIENE

Believe it or not,
washing your hands is the
single most important thing
you can do
to keep from getting sick
or spreading your germs to others.



WASH UP, WASH WELL, AND WASH OFTEN


It's not just when they look dirty!

You should always wash your hands **before:**

- ▷ Handling food
- ▷ Setting the table
- ▷ Eating
- ▷ Treating a scrape, cut, or wound
- ▷ Tending to someone who is sick
- ▷ Putting in or taking out contact lenses

You should always wash your hands **after:**

- ▷ Going to the bathroom
- ▷ Blowing or wiping your nose with a tissue
- ▷ Covering your mouth/nose when you cough or sneeze
- ▷ Preparing food
- ▷ Touching burns, cuts, or sores
- ▷ Playing with pets and animals
- ▷ Handling dirty dishes, utensils, or touching cabinet tops where food is prepared
- ▷ Being around someone who is sick
- ▷ Being physically active
- ▷ Taking out the garbage



Wash your hands more often when a family member or friend you spend a lot of time around is sick. This will cut down on your chances of catching whatever germs they have.

HAND WASHING HOW-TO'S

- 1. Take the plunge.** Wet your hands under warm running water and apply some soap.
- 2. Lather up!** Rub your hands together hard to build up lots of soapy bubbles. They'll help scrub dirt and germs away.
- 3. Don't forget.** Washing your palms isn't enough — make sure you wash hands front and back, get between your fingers, around your wrists, and under your nails for 20 seconds. Sing your favorite tune for 20 seconds to get the timing right.
- 4. Rinse well in warm water.** A good rinse will get any last stragglers off your hands and down the drain!
- 5. Dry your hands completely.** Wipe your hands with a paper towel and throw it away after you're done.

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to clean your hands:

- ✓ Apply a dime-sized amount of hand rub to the palm of one of your hands, or use an alcohol-based wipe.
- ✓ Rub both of your hands together, making sure to get the gel or wipe over all surfaces of your hands and fingers. Continue until hands feel dry.

Sources: BAM! Body and Mind (<http://www.bam.gov>) and Hand washing: Clean Hands Save Lives <http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/>, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.