

Hand Washing

Indirect transmission (from hand-to-hand, or hand to contaminated object & then back to hand) is the main way in which influenza is passed from person to person. The need for ***routine and frequent hand washing*** is vital in preventing the transmission of the virus.

The influenza virus is relatively easy to destroy. ***Washing with plain soap and water*** or other antiseptic-based hand wash products eliminates the virus.

For Infection Prevention & Control:

- keep hands away from your eyes, nose, & mouth
- wash hands frequently with regular soap & water or use an alcohol-based hand gel (70% alcohol based is good) if access to water is limited
- gloves are not a substitute for hand washing – wash hands after gloves have been worn

Hand Hygiene:

- use soap and water: before eating, after use of wash room, if hands are visibly dirty
- use alcohol-based hand gels in other situations, such as when access to sinks & water is limited
- keep fingernails short & avoid the use of nail polish or artificial nails. (*impede visualization of soil under nails*)

When to Wash Hands:

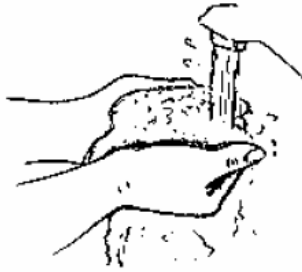
- Before, during & after food preparation; prior to eating
- After having contact with a person who has influenza; after treating wounds or cuts
- After using the wash room
- After touching your eyes, nose & mouth; after coughing or sneezing
- After touching animals or animal waste; after handling garbage
- Whenever hands are dirty

Hand Washing Procedure:

- Remove jewelry from the hands before washing
- Wet hands under warm running water (*allows for washing away of loosened microorganisms*).
- Apply regular soap and rub all surfaces of the hands vigorously for a minimum of 10 to 20 seconds. Do not miss areas such as the thumbs, under nails, backs of fingers and hands.
- Rinse hands under warm running water (*washes off microorganisms and residual soap*).
- Dry hands with a disposable paper towel (*avoid re-useable towels for potential of microbial contamination*).
- Turn off the tap without re-contaminating the hands - use the disposable paper towel with which hands were dried. (*avoids re-contamination of the hands*)
- If running water is not available & hands are not visibly soiled, clean hands with a waterless alcohol-based hand gel.

Hand Hygiene with Soap and Water

**1. Remove jewelry.
Wet hands with warm
water**



2. Add soap to palms



**3. Rub hands
together to create a
lather**



**4. Cover all surfaces of
the hands and fingers**



**5. Clean knuckles,
back of hands and
fingers**



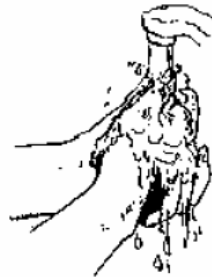
**6. Clean the space
between the thumb
and index finger**



**7. Work the finger tips
into the palms to
clean under the nails**



**8. Rinse well under
warm running water**



**9. Dry with a single-
use towel and then
use towel to turn off
the tap**



Minimum wash time 10-20 seconds.

Hand Hygiene with Alcohol-based Hand Sanitizer

1. Remove jewelry. Apply enough product to open palms.**



2. Rub hands together palms to palms



3. Rub in between and around fingers



4. Cover all surfaces of the hands and fingers



5. Rub backs of hands and fingers. Rub each thumb.



6. Rub fingertips of each hand in opposite palm



7. Keep rubbing until hands are dry.

****The volume required to be effective varies from product to product. Enough product to keep hands moist for 15 seconds should be applied.**

Do not use these products with water. Do not use paper towels to dry hands.

Note: Wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty or contaminated with blood or other body fluids. Certain manufacturers recommend washing hands with soap and water after 5-10 applications of gel.

Hand Hygiene Supplies:

- Regular soap (other antiseptic based hand wash products optional)
- Alcohol-based (70%) hand sanitizer gel (useful for travel purposes, at front entrances of facilities, when access to sinks & water is limited)
- Ex: of alcohol hand gel products: Purell; Microsan