

Hand washing



Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. It is best to wash your hands with soap and clean running water for 20 seconds. However, if soap and clean water are not available, use an alcohol-based product to clean your hands. Alcohol-based hand rubs significantly reduce the number of germs on skin and are fast acting.

When should you wash your hands?

1. Before preparing or eating food.
2. After going to the bathroom.
3. After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has gone to the bathroom.
4. Before and after caring for someone who is sick.
5. After handling uncooked foods, particularly raw meat, poultry, or fish.
6. After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
7. After handling an animal or animal waste.
8. After handling garbage.
9. Before and after treating a cut or wound.
10. After handling items contaminated by flood water or sewage.

Using alcohol-based hand sanitisers

When your hands are visibly dirty, you should wash them with soap and warm water when available. However, if **soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitisers** (such as [Dis-Med D-Germ](#)).

1. Apply product to the palm of one hand.
2. Rub hands together.
3. Rub the product over all surfaces of hands and fingers until your hands are dry.

Washing with soap and water

1. Place your hands together under water (warm water if possible).
2. Rub your hands together for at least 20 seconds (with soap if possible). Wash all surfaces well, including wrists, palms, backs of hands, fingers, and under the fingernails.

3. Clean the dirt from under your fingernails.
4. Rinse the soap from your hands.
5. Dry your hands completely with a clean towel if possible (this helps remove the germs). However, if towels are not available it is okay to air dry your hands.
6. Pat your skin rather than rubbing to avoid chapping and cracking.

Use liquid soap



Palm to palm



Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked



Palm to palm, fingers interlaced



Rotational rubbing of right thumb clasped in left palm and vice versa



Right palm over back of left hand and left palm over back of right hand



Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards, with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa

Rinse and dry your hands thoroughly

7. If you use a disposable towel, throw it in the trash.