



A Union of Professionals

Hand-hygiene Recommendations

When to wash or sanitize hands

Adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- When hands are visibly dirty or contaminated with blood or other body fluids, wash hands with either a non-antimicrobial soap and water or an antimicrobial soap and water.
- If hands are not visibly soiled, use an alcohol-based hand rub for routinely decontaminating hands in all other situations where you have contaminated hands or must have physical contact with a student.
- Decontaminate hands after contact with a student's intact skin (e.g., when lifting student or assisting a student).
- Decontaminate hands after contact with body fluids or excretions, mucous membranes, non-intact skin, and wound dressings if hands are not visibly soiled.
- Decontaminate hands if moving from a contaminated-body site to a clean-body site during child care.
- Decontaminate hands after removing gloves.
- Before eating and after using a restroom, wash hands with a non-antimicrobial soap and water or with an antimicrobial soap and water.
- Antimicrobial-impregnated wipes (i.e., towelettes) may be considered as an alternative to washing hands with non-antimicrobial soap and water. Because they are not as effective as alcohol-based hand rubs or washing hands with an antimicrobial soap and water for reducing bacterial counts on the hands, they are not a substitute for using an alcohol-based hand rub or antimicrobial soap.

Hand-hygiene Product Use

- When decontaminating hands with an alcohol-based hand rub, apply product and rub hands and fingers until hands are dry.
- When washing hands with soap and water, wet hands first with water, apply an amount of product recommended by the manufacturer to hands, and rub hands together vigorously for at least 15 seconds, covering all surfaces of the hands and fingers. Rinse hands with water and dry thoroughly with a disposable towel. Use towel to turn off the faucet. Avoid using hot water, because repeated exposure to hot water may increase the risk of dermatitis.

- Liquid, bar, leaflet or powdered forms of plain soap are acceptable when washing hands with a non-antimicrobial soap and water. When bar soap is used, soap racks that facilitate drainage and small bars of soap should be used.

Selection of hand-hygiene agents

- Provide workers with effective hand-hygiene products that have low irritancy.
- Solicit input from these employees regarding the feel, fragrance, and skin tolerance of any products under consideration. The cost of hand-hygiene products should not be the primary factor influencing product selection.
- When selecting non-antimicrobial soaps, antimicrobial soaps, or alcohol-based hand rubs, solicit information from manufacturers regarding any known interactions between products used to clean hands, skin care products, and the types of gloves used in the institution.
- Before making purchasing decisions, evaluate the dispenser systems of various product manufacturers or distributors to ensure that dispensers function adequately and deliver an appropriate volume of product.
- Do not add soap to a partially empty soap dispenser. This practice of “topping off” dispensers can lead to bacterial contamination of soap.

Skin care

- Use hand lotions or creams to minimize the occurrence of irritant contact dermatitis (rash) associated with hand antisepsis or hand washing.

Other Aspects of Hand Hygiene

- Do not wear artificial fingernails or extenders when having direct contact with children at high risk.
- Wear gloves when contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials, mucous membranes, and non-intact skin could occur.

For more information, visit www.aft.org/topics/h1n1.



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