

**Why should you wash your hands?**

Keeping your hands clean is one of the most important steps you 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.

When should you wash your hands?

- Before preparing or eating food
- After going to the bathroom
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has gone to the bathroom
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- After handling uncooked foods, especially raw meat, poultry or fish
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After handling an animal or animal waste
- After handling garbage
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After handling items contaminated by flood water or sewage

When should you use alcohol-based hand sanitizers?

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 sanitizers. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers significantly reduce the number of germs on skin and are fast acting.

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

Always follow the manufacturer's directions regarding amount of product needed.

What is the correct way to wash your hands?

When done correctly, hand washing is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of diseases. Here are five easy steps to make sure you wash your hands correctly.

1. Wet hands and apply liquid, bar or powdered soap.
2. Rub hands together vigorously to make a lather, and scrub all surfaces.
 - Scrub well for 20 seconds. It takes that long to dislodge and remove stubborn germs. To time yourself, sing the ABCs.
3. Rinse hands well under running water.
4. Dry hands using a paper towel or air dryer.
5. If possible, use a paper towel to turn off the faucet.

Remember: If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

