

Hand Washing is Important!

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Were you aware there is a day set aside to remind each of us about the importance of washing your hands frequently? May 5 is World Health Organization's world Hand Hygiene Day. Hand washing is not just for kids. Washing with soap and water or using hand sanitizer is the most effective way to prevent the spread of infections. In fact, it is the number one way, so it's important to clean your hands often.

Just how often?

- Before eating
- Before, during, and after preparing food
- After using the bathroom
- After coughing, sneezing, blowing your nose, or caring for someone who is ill
- After taking out the garbage
- After petting animals – any animal!
- When visiting someone who is ill
- Whenever your hands look or feel dirty – they're probably dirty!

Does singing "Happy Birthday" really work? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention it does.

- Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap
- Lather your hands by rubbing them together. Don't forget the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end – twice.
- Rinse your hands well under clean, running water
- Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them. Don't touch the faucet handles after washing. Use a paper towel to turn off the faucet, discard.

What if I'm somewhere there is no soap or water?

- Use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
- Apply to palm of hand, rub hands together and all over surface of hands and fingers until dry

Most important, remember the importance of hand hygiene and its ability to prevent the spread infections.