



Wash your Hands

Washing your hands regularly helps protect you from catching or spreading disease and illness. Many preventable diseases could be avoided if everyone washed their hands.

The 4 Principles of Hand Health Awareness

1. Wash your hands when they are dirty and BEFORE eating
2. DO NOT cough into your hands
3. DO NOT sneeze into your hands
4. Above all, DO NOT put your fingers into your eyes, nose or mouth

When should I wash my hands?

The CDC recommends washing your hands every time you:

- Prepare or eat food
- Use the restroom
- Care for someone who is sick (both before and after)
- Blow your nose, cough, or sneeze
- Handle garbage
- Treat a cut or wound
- Change a diaper or clean up after children
- Handle an animal or animal waste

Is there a right way to wash my hands?

Just getting your hands wet isn't enough. To prevent disease, the CDC recommends:

1. Rinse your hands with water.
2. Soap them with bar or liquid soap, then create a lather by vigorously rubbing your hands together for at least 20 seconds. Make sure to wash your palms, the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water and dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry.

What else can I do?

- Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to reduce the number of microbes on them in most situations. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. **Hand sanitizers are not as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.**
- Be careful when using sponges and dish towels. These are ideal sites for bacteria growth. Always wash your hands after using them.
- Keep your work area clean. Regularly clean your keyboard, phone, or other equipment.
- Remind your coworkers of the importance of hand washing, especially when you see someone neglecting to wash their hands.

To learn more about how washing hands regularly can help prevent disease, ask your health care provider, or visit the CDC's creative web site dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of hand washing at www.henrythehand.com.

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