



# Washing Your Hands Properly: Do You Know How?

Few activities can reduce your chance of getting (or spreading) illness more effectively than simply washing your hands frequently. There are germs everywhere, and the best way to keep from catching something is to wash your hands well and often, and to keep your hands away from your face.

Here are some recommended steps to follow:

- Wet your hands thoroughly with cold or warm water.
- Apply enough soap to cover your hands. (An anti-bacterial soap is not more effective than regular soap.)
- Lather well, rubbing your hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds.
- Scrub the backs of your hands, your wrists, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Rinse off all the soap.
- Dry your hands with a clean towel or an air dryer.
- Use your towel to turn off the faucet (remember, you touched it before you washed your hands!)

At times when there is no soap around, hand sanitizers will do the trick:

- Make sure your sanitizer contains at least 60 percent alcohol. These are more effective than wipes or towelettes.
- Apply enough sanitizer to wet both hands completely.
- Rub your hands together, covering all surfaces, for 25 seconds or until your hands are dry.
- Don't rely on hand sanitizers if your hands are visibly dirty.

You should always wash your hands when they are dirty, but also:

## **BEFORE**

- Preparing food
- Eating
- Treating wounds or giving medicine
- Touching a sick or injured person
- Inserting or removing contact lenses

## **AFTER**

- Preparing food, especially raw meat or poultry
- Using the toilet
- Changing a diaper
- Touching an animal's waste
- Blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing into your hands
- Treating wounds
- Touching a sick or injured person
- Handling garbage or anything that's dirty
- If you follow these guidelines, you're far less likely to contract or spread colds, the flu, and other communicable diseases.

Visit [Concentra.com/better](https://www.concentra.com/better) for more health and safety tips.

