



Effective Hand Hygiene – Preventing the Spread of Disease

Cleaning your hands reduces the spread of germs to patients and the risk of healthcare provider colonization or infection caused by germs acquired from the patient

- **Two methods for hand hygiene: Alcohol-based hand sanitizer and washing with soap and water**
 - Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are the most effective products for reducing the number of germs on the hands of healthcare providers
 - Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are the preferred method for cleaning your hands in most clinical situations
 - Wash your hands with soap and water whenever they are visibly soiled/dirty, before eating, and after using the restroom
 - **Due to possible shortages on hand sanitizer, it is acceptable to wash hands with soap and water in place of using hand sanitizer**

- **When to perform hand hygiene:**
 - Multiple opportunities for hand hygiene may occur during a single care episode. Following are the clinical indications for hand hygiene:
 - Alcohol-based hand sanitizer:
 - Immediately before touching a patient
 - Before performing an aseptic task
 - Before moving from work on a soiled body site to clean body site on the same patient
 - After touching a patient or the patient's immediate environment
 - After contact with blood, body fluids or contaminated surfaces
 - Immediately after glove removal
 - Wash with soap and water:
 - When hands are visibly soiled
 - After caring for a patient with known or suspected diarrhea
 - After known or suspected exposure to spores (e.g. B. anthracis, C difficile outbreaks)

- **Hand hygiene techniques:**
 - Alcohol-based hand sanitizer:
 - Put product on hands and rub hands together
 - Cover all surfaces until hands feel dry
 - This should take around 20 seconds
 - Washing hands with soap and water:
 - Wet your hands first with water
 - Apply the amount of soap recommended by manufacturer to your hands
 - Rub your hands together vigorously for at least 20 seconds, covering all surfaces of the hands and fingers
 - Rinse your hands with warm water and use disposable towels to dry.
 - Use towel to turn off the faucet