

Resources

More information on hand washing and preventing colds and flu, avoiding food poisoning, and other activities can be found online at:

Center for Health & Hygiene in the Home and Community
www.simmons.edu/hygieneandhealth

APIC
www.apic.org

Centers for Disease Control
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/habits.htm>.

Partnership for Food Safety Education
www.fightbac.org



Official logo for International Infection Prevention Week October 14-20, 2007
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<http://www.imprintmail.com/apic/>



Center for Health & Hygiene in the Home & Community

The Center for Health and Hygiene in the Home and Community serves as a national and international resource for information and education, applied research, professional training and conferences. The Center focuses on issues relating to hygiene and infection control in areas such as:

- consumer food safety
- home hygiene
- daycare
- preschool
- homecare
- sports and leisure activity
- travel and hospitality

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Center for Health & Hygiene in the Home & Community

Hand Washing
for Better Health



October 2007

International Infection Prevention Week: It's in Your Hands

October 14–20, 2007

Washing Your Hands—Essential for Good Health

Hand washing is a key component in reducing the risk of a number of infections including flu, the common cold, foodborne infections, and skin and eye infections. In fact, according to the CDC, hand washing is the most important means of preventing infection. This brochure gives an overview on proper hand washing technique in an effort to decrease the spread of infection.

Hand Washing

Proper hand hygiene involves the use of soap and warm running water, rubbing hand vigorously for at least 20 seconds. Follow these simple steps:

1. Wet your hands before applying soap
2. Rub your hands together and create friction for at least 20 seconds (wash your hands long enough for you to finish singing your ABC's)
3. Try to cleanse between fingers and under jewelry
4. Rinse your hands thoroughly to remove all soap
5. Turn off the water with a paper towel

Alcohol-gel hand sanitizer is an excellent substitute if you cannot get to a sink with soap and towels. In fact we recommend that people carry a small bottle of hand sanitizer at all times.

Hand Drying

Careful hand drying is also critical. If using paper towels, rub hands on two paper towels (the first removes most of the water and the second completes drying), drying the hands for 10 seconds on each, or 30-45 seconds under an air dryer, or 20 seconds on a cloth towel, using two parts of the towel. If using an air dryer make sure your hands are completely dry before walking away. When in a public restroom, use a paper towel to open the bathroom door and dispose of paper towel in a trash bin outside of door.

When to Wash

Important times to wash or sanitize the hands include:

Before

- food preparation
- eating
- applying contact lenses and make-up
- touching areas of skin infection and skin wounds

After

- food preparation
- using the toilet
- handling soiled laundry
- using sports equipment and gym facilities
- coughing, sneezing, or vomiting
- contact with pets and any animals
- working outdoors
- sports participation
- touching areas of skin infection and skin wounds

- for students, upon returning to campus from off-site internships and clinical placements

In the work or school environment, hands should be washed or sanitized frequently, for example, after contact with potentially contaminated, shared surfaces including:

- Hands or face of others - including handshakes
- Doorknob or handle (including microwave and refrigerator)
- Copier machine buttons or parts
- Another person's keyboard or phone
- Shared coffee pot handle
- Elevator buttons
- Countertops
- Food or food container handled by others
- Shared books or other materials
- Shared hand or power tools



www.fightbac.org