

# CLEAN YOUR HANDS

BEFORE  
coming into  
contact with  
a patient or  
patient  
environment



## Examples (not an exhaustive list):

- Prior to entering patient room and touching patient's environment.
- Prior to entering patient room and touching patient.
- Prior to touching patient or their environment, after touching curtain/door in a multi-patient room.
- Prior to touching a patient or their environment, after touching your face/uniform/lab coat.
- Prior to touching patient's equipment.
- Prior to transferring patient.
- Prior to shaking hands.
- Prior to taking any vital signs.
- Prior to using a stethoscope on a patient's body.
- Prior to making patient comfortable in bed.
- Prior to patient's morning hygiene.
- Prior to contact with patient's wheelchair or walker.
- Prior to bringing patient a puzzle/exercise equipment in physiotherapy/occupational therapy.
- Prior to touching a patient while assisting with their physiotherapy/occupational therapy.
- Prior to putting on gloves and/or other PPE.
- After touching one's face or clothes, prior to touching patient or his/her environment.
- Prior to touching an IV pump.

1. What does hand hygiene do to improve patient safety?
  - a. A seemingly simple task such as making someone comfortable in bed can result in thousands of organisms transferred onto, and from, a HCW's hands. Infectious organisms can have serious and potentially deadly impacts on a patient's health. Performing hand hygiene with an alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) will destroy all organisms in most instances. Not performing hand hygiene after a task would result in the HCW transferring organisms to the next patient or object touched. Hand hygiene is the single most important way to stop the spread of infections.
2. What is the patient environment and what is the external/healthcare environment?
  - a. The patient environment is the patient, their space, including wheelchairs, walkers, their belongings. The patient environment moves with the patient. The external/healthcare environment is outside of the patient environment, including the hallways, nursing desk, charting areas, computer space at the end of the beds, curtains in a double-bed room.
3. I am washing my hands frequently while being audited, but it is not impacting my On-the-Spot feedback from the Hand Hygiene Auditor. Why?
  - a. Frequent hand hygiene is important, but auditors are looking for hand hygiene at the appropriate 4 moments, not just frequent hand washing.
4. How would you like to be notified when you miss hand hygiene (or have a near miss)?
5. What are some things that we do without thinking that cause us to miss a Moment 1 even if we have cleaned our hands?

