

WRHA Infection Prevention & Control  
Learning Booklet

# The “who, what, where, when, how and why” of Hand Hygiene



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Remember to practice



## Routine Practices

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**WHO** should be practicing Hand Hygiene?

EVERYONE!



Hand hygiene is important not only for healthcare providers; everyone needs to be practicing appropriate and effective hand hygiene regardless of work setting

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**WHAT** is Hand Hygiene?



Hand Hygiene includes cleaning hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub in order to remove germs, also known as *microorganisms*

## Hand Hygiene

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### WHERE should you perform Hand Hygiene?

- ⇒ Hand hygiene is important in all work settings, including Acute Care, Long Term Care Facilities, Community and Corporate sites.
- ⇒ Busy health care providers need access to hand hygiene products at *point of care* where patient/resident/client (PRC) or PRC environment contact is taking place.

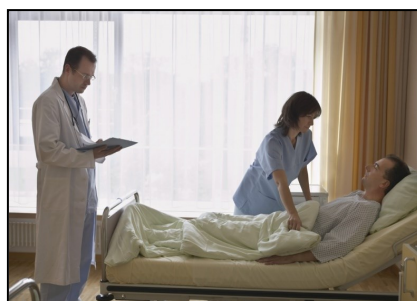
### POINTS OF CARE

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The PRC

The Healthcare  
Provider



Care involving  
contact

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## **Routine Practices**

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**Why** do we need to learn about Hand Hygiene?

- ⇒ Hand hygiene is the most important way to prevent the spread of germs.
  - ⇒ Hand Hygiene helps keep you healthy by reducing the number of germs on your hands and helps reduce the spread of germs to your PRC, family, friends, or coworkers.
  - ⇒ Using appropriate hand hygiene prevents contamination of the PRC's environment.
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**When** do you perform Hand Hygiene?

There are **FOUR MOMENTS** when Hand Hygiene is performed:

1. **BEFORE** initial PRC or PRC environment contact
2. **BEFORE** aseptic or clean procedure
3. **AFTER** body fluid exposure risk
4. **AFTER** PRC or PRC environment contact

## Hand Hygiene

### MOMENT 1

**BEFORE initial PRC or PRC environment contact. Some examples are:**



Home environment



Treatment area or clinic room

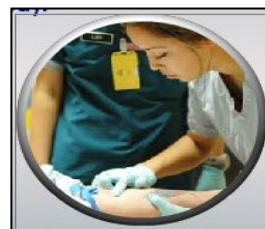
**This is to protect the PRC and their environment from harmful germs carried on your hands**

### MOMENT 2

**BEFORE an aseptic or clean procedure examples:**



Handling dressings or touching open wounds



An aseptic procedure

**Clean your hands immediately before any aseptic or clean procedure to protect the patient against harmful organisms**

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### **MOMENT 3**

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**AFTER body fluid exposure examples:**



Contact with body fluids,  
non-intact skin or mucous  
membranes

Removal of  
gloves



Using a tissue to wipe  
your nose or using the  
washroom

**Help protect yourself and the  
healthcare environment from  
harmful patient organisms**





## MOMENT 4

**AFTER contact with the PRC or the PRC environment. Some examples are:**

Contact with a PRC's  
room or equipment



Shaking  
hands

Transferring a PRC



Contact with the home  
environment

Contact with  
treatment area or  
clinic room



**Help protect yourself and the healthcare  
environment from harmful patient  
organisms**

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## **Routine Practices**

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### **HOW** to perform hand hygiene

Proper technique is important when it comes to effective hand hygiene. Without proper hand hygiene technique, we can still spread many microorganisms with our hands. This section will cover the proper techniques for the following methods:



Alcohol-based  
hand rub  
(ABHR)



Soap & water



Without water  
when hands are  
visibly soiled



## Hand Hygiene

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### Alcohol Based Hand Rub (ABHR)

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The recommended method of hand hygiene in any healthcare setting when hands are not visibly soiled

- ⇒ Apply a dime-sized amount (2-3 ml) of product into palms of dry hands
- ⇒ Rub product into hands
- ⇒ Palm to palm
- ⇒ Rub fingertips of each hand in opposite palm
- ⇒ Between and around fingers
- ⇒ Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand
- ⇒ Rub back of each hand with opposite palm
- ⇒ Rub hands until dry before performing another task
- ⇒ **DO NOT WIPE OFF**



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## **Routine Practices**

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# **Alcohol Based Hand**

- Alcohol based hand rub (ABHR) is at least 60% ethyl alcohol, or ethanol (equal to 120-proof). To compare, a bottle of vodka is 80-proof .
- Ingesting small amounts of ABHR can produce the same side effects as consuming large amounts of alcohol:
  - ⇒ Headache, dizziness, drowsiness, incoordination, nausea, slowed reaction time, slurred speech, giddiness, and unconsciousness
- Consumption of ABHR can also result in:
  - ⇒ Brain, liver, and kidney damage (from long-term use)

## Hand Hygiene

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### Soap & Water

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The recommended method when hands are visibly soiled. Plain soap is used for routine hand hygiene while anti-microbial soap is used in acute care high-risk areas.

- ⇒ Wet hands under warm running water
- ⇒ Apply soap and distribute over hands
- ⇒ Rub hands together vigorously for 15 seconds to create a good lather: Palm to palm
- ⇒ Rub fingertips of each hand in opposite palm
- ⇒ Between and around fingers
- ⇒ Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand
- ⇒ Rub back of each hand with opposite palm
- ⇒ Rinse hands thoroughly under warm running water
- ⇒ Pat hands dry with a paper towel
- ⇒ Turn off faucet using a paper towel



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## **Routine Practices**

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### **Hands Are Soiled and No Water**

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- ⇒ Remove visible soiling with moist towelette
- ⇒ Apply a dime-sized amount of hand-rub product into palms of dry hands
- ⇒ Rub product into hands: Palm to palm
- ⇒ Rub fingertips of each hand in opposite palm
- ⇒ Between and around fingers
- ⇒ Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand
- ⇒ Rub back of each hand with opposite palm
- ⇒ Rub hands until dry before performing another task
- ⇒ *DO NOT WIPE OFF*



## Hand Hygiene

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### “Handy” Tips

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- ⇒ Artificial nails, gel nails or extenders are not to be worn by staff who have direct patient contact.
- ⇒ Contaminated surfaces or objects should not be touched after performing hand hygiene.
- ⇒ Avoid touching your face, especially your eyes and nose.
- ⇒ Fingernails should be kept short and should not be seen past the tip of the finger
- ⇒ Nail polish may be worn, but should be removed when chipped.
- ⇒ Do not “top up” a partially-used hand hygiene product dispenser.
- ⇒ If re-usable dispensers are used they must be emptied, washed and dried prior to being refilled. Hand lotion bottles must not be re-used.

## **Routine Practices**

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- ⇒ Include frequently missed areas when performing hand hygiene such as thumbs, palms, web spaces, under nails and the backs of fingers and hands.
- ⇒ Use supplied lotions that are compatible with hand hygiene products and gloves to minimize skin irritation that can occur with frequent hand hygiene.



## Hand Hygiene

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### Hand Hygiene Quiz

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1. Hand hygiene is the most important way to prevent the spread of germs (microorganisms).

»True

»False

2. When washing hands, which of the following is important to remember?

a) Wash with hottest water possible

b) The focus of good hand washing is the palms

c) Turn faucet off after disposing of your paper towel

d) Lather and rub hands together for 15 seconds

3. Alcohol-based hand rub may be used instead of soap and water when hands are not visibly soiled.

»True

»False

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## **Routine Practices**

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4. Which of the following is the correct order when performing hand hygiene?
- a) Wet hands; Apply soap; Rub vigorously; Rinse hands
  - b) Apply soap; Wet hands; Rub vigorously; Rinse hands
  - c) Apply soap; Rub vigorously; Rinse hands; Turn off faucet
  - d) Wet hands; Apply alcohol based hand rub; Rub vigorously; Turn off faucet
5. When hands are visibly soiled and water is not available, how is hand hygiene performed?
- a) Using a moist towelette
  - b) Using alcohol based hand rub
  - c) Using a moist towelette followed by alcohol-based hand rub
  - d) Using a disinfectant wipe

## Hand Hygiene

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### Answer key:

- |         |      |
|---------|------|
| 1. TRUE | 4. A |
| 2. D    | 5. C |
| 3. TRUE |      |

Remember to practice

