

Caring hands are clean hands

Myth Busters

Myth: Soap and water is better than alcohol-based hand rubs.

Alcohol-based hand rubs significantly reduce the number of microorganisms on skin, are fast acting and cause less skin irritation. For these reasons, the Ministry of Health and LTC are recommending alcohol-based hand rubs as the preferred method of decontaminating hands in health care.

Myth: If my hands look clean, then I don't have to wash them.

You can pick up germs from objects, such as doorknobs and stair railings, touched by other people who aren't good handwashers. Most are harmless, but you can pick up some that cause illnesses, such as colds, flu, and diarrhea. When we forget to wash our hands, or don't wash them properly, we can spread these germs to other people, or to ourselves by touching our eyes, mouth, nose or cuts.

Myth: Alcohol-based hand rubs are drying to the skin.

Alcohol-based hand rubs have extra ingredients to help rehydrate the skin. One study showed that people using a hand rub had better skin condition than people using only soap and water.

Myth: I'm too busy to clean my hands as often as I should.

Alcohol-based hand rubs are quick, easy to use and are accessible outside of every patient room.

Myth: If I just stay away from people with a cold or flu, I'll never get sick.

Sick people spread germs that cause cold, flu and other illnesses by sneezing, coughing onto their hands and touching objects, such as doorknobs and stair railings. You can pick up these germs and get sick if you rub your eyes or touch your nose.

Myth: After using the alcohol-based hand rub ten times, I have to wash my hands with soap and water.

Alcohol-based hand rubs are quick, easy to use and more accessible than sinks. They are the preferred method of decontaminating hands in health care. There is no data that limits how many times you can use alcohol-based hand rub. While the alcohol does kill germs, alcohol-based products do not remove dirt. "Dirty hands" must still be washed with soap and water.

Myth: When my hands are dirty, I can just run them under water to clean them.

Dirt and hitchhiking organisms get caught up in the oil on the skin. Get rid of them by using soap and water. The mechanical action of scrubbing loosens up the dirt and microbes on our hands and the soap picks them up and binds to them so that the water can wash them away.

For more information please contact:



Bridgepoint Health, 14 St. Matthews Road
Toronto, ON M4M 2B5
tel 416.461.8252 www.bridgepointhealth.ca



Hand Hygiene



Caring hands are clean hands

Hand Hygiene

Why, Who and How?

Why?

- Around the globe thousands of people die every day of infections acquired while receiving health care
- Hands are the main pathways of germ transmission
- Hand hygiene is the most important measure to avoid the transmission of harmful germs and to prevent infections associated with health care
- This brochure explains who should practice hand hygiene and how to do it

Who?

- Everybody! Health care workers, caregivers or persons involved in patient care need to be concerned about hand hygiene


How?

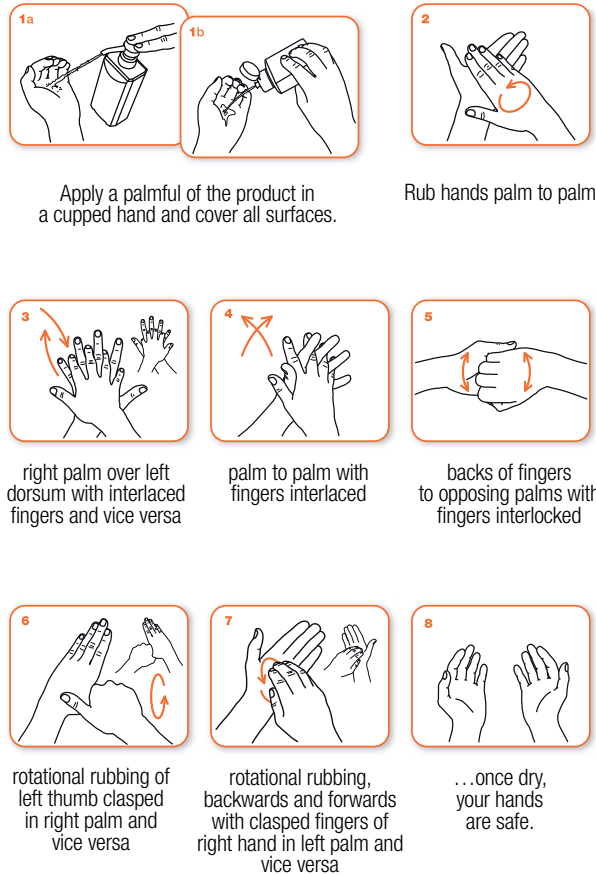
- Clean your hands by rubbing them with alcohol-based hand rub located at every major Bridgepoint entrance, and on every unit
- If your hands are visibly dirty, wash them with soap and water

Hand care when washing with soap

- Take care of your hands by regularly using protective hand care cream or lotion, at least daily
- Use warm water to wash your hands as very hot water can damage your skin

How to handrub?

 Duration of the entire procedure: **20-30 sec.**



How to handwash?

 Duration of the entire procedure: **40-60 sec.**

