

Perform Hand Hygiene Properly

Many infectious diseases can be transmitted through direct contact. If hands are contaminated with pathogens, especially when they are soiled with respiratory discharge or faecal matters, diseases include dysentery, cholera, hepatitis, influenza, and hand, foot and mouth disease can be spread easily. Observance of hand hygiene is the prerequisite of the prevention of the spread of communicable diseases. Using soap and water or rub hands with alcohol-based handrub can achieve hand hygiene.

When do we perform Hand Hygiene?

1. Before touching the eyes, nose and mouth;
2. Before eating or handling food;
3. After using the toilet;
4. When hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions, e.g. after coughing or sneezing;
5. After touching public installations or equipment, such as escalator handrails, elevator control panels or door knobs;
6. After handling vomitus or faecal matter , e.g. after changing diaper;
7. Before and after visiting hospitals, residential care homes or caring for the sick;
8. After making contact with animals, poultry or their droppings.

How to select appropriate agents for hand hygiene?

In general, we should wash hands with soap and water when hands are visibly dirty or visible soiled with blood, body fluid, after using the toilet or changing the diapers. When hands are not visibly soiled, 70-80% alcohol-based handrub is also an effective alternative. According to World Health Organization's recommendation, most alcohol-based handrubs contain either ethanol, isopropanol or n-propanol, or a combination of two of these products. Always check the expiry date before purchasing and using alcohol-based handrub.

Steps for Hand Hygiene

a) Hand hygiene with soap and water:

1. Wet hands under running water.
2. Apply liquid soap and rub hands together to make a soapy lather.
3. Away from the running water, rub hands in accordance with the 7 steps of hand hygiene technique for at least 20 seconds (refer to point c for detail). Do not rinse off soap while rubbing.
4. Rinse hands thoroughly under running water.
5. Dry hands thoroughly with either a clean cotton towel, a paper towel, or a hand dryer.
6. The cleaned hands should not touch the water tap directly again. For example: using a paper towel to wrap the faucet before turn it off.

b) Hand hygiene with alcohol-based handrub

Apply a palmful of alcohol-based handrub enough to cover all surfaces of the hands. Rub hands in accordance with the 7 steps of hand hygiene technique for at least 20 seconds until the hands are dry (refer to point c for detail).

c) Hand hygiene technique

Proper hand hygiene technique should follow the 7 steps and rub hands for at least 20 seconds.



For video demonstration

Please visit the Centre for Health Protection website at

<http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/static/32975.html>

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