

Hand Washing How-To

(The helping hand you need to promote good hand hygiene in your facility!)



You might think you're perfectly capable of effectively washing your hands – but did you know that **95 per cent of people wash their hands incorrectly and don't even know it?**

That's right, studies have found that most people totally miss the mark when it comes to hand hygiene and the vast majority are washing their hands incorrectly! Gross. (Think about that the next time you have to shake hands...more on that later).

To make matters worse, cold and flu season is creeping up on us, too. That means more germs and bacteria lurking on common surfaces, and a greater chance of you and your employees picking them up! Fortunately, washing hands with soap and water is one of the most effective and low-cost ways to prevent catching and spreading cold and flu viruses.

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Hand Washing 101

Washing your hands properly from start to finish takes less than a minute. That's a pretty good trade-off to significantly reduce the risk of catching a cold or flu. Follow these guidelines to be sure you're effectively washing your hands:

1. Wet your hands with warm water
2. Apply soap and lather your hands by rubbing them together firmly, covering them entirely in soap. If it's available, use anti-bacterial liquid soap
3. Use your hands to scrub under your nails, between your fingers and the backs of your hands for at least 20 seconds
4. Rinse your hands until they are clean of dirt and soap
5. Dry your hands, preferably using paper towels
6. Use hand sanitizer upon exiting a washroom or facility to ensure your hands are completely disinfected as you may have had to use your hands to open doors

Hand sanitizer is also a great substitute when you can't actually wash your hands. Be sure to apply a sufficient amount and don't wipe off! Hands should be wet for at least 15-20 seconds

When to Wash? More often than you think.

Here are a few instances when you should definitely wash your hands. These are not the only ones, though – think about where you've been – a healthcare or daycare facility, for example – and do it as many times as you need to!

Be sure to wash your hands:

1. Before and after coming in contact with food
2. Before and after wearing gloves
3. After using the bathroom
4. After touching garbage
5. When they are visibly dirty or feel dirty
6. After blowing your nose
7. After coming in contact with high-touch surfaces, like door handles, escalator rails and elevator buttons
8. After shaking hands with other people



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The Handshake Dilemma

Handshakes can be a tricky issue when it comes to cold and flu season. Handshakes are often the polite, and professional, thing to do but unfortunately they're also an easy way to spread germs. It can be seen as impolite to decline a handshake, so the best solution is to wash your hands or use hand sanitizer as soon as possible afterwards. (In the meantime, try to avoid touching your face or putting your hands in your eyes or mouth - which you should avoid doing anyway to prevent illness!)

More Ways to Keep Your Facility Healthy

You can help to promote good health in your facility with a few simple measures. Show staff and visitors a commitment to ensuring a healthy environment by putting hand sanitizer dispensers near doors so that people can use them as they enter and leave the building.

Ensure washrooms are well stocked with soap, sanitizer, paper towels

and bath tissue. Most importantly, maintain a clean facility overall to reduce the amount of bacteria on surfaces, using high quality cleaning products and tools. To take cold, flu and other illness prevention to the next level, add electrostatic disinfecting to your cleaning routine each week in order to eliminate viruses and bacteria from hard-to-reach areas such as computer keyboards and telephone keypads.



See here for more [reasons to wash your hands....](#) or learn more about [electrostatic disinfecting](#), the revolutionary approach to disinfecting for commercial, educational, institutional and athletic facilities.



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