



Clean hands are the best protection against spreading germs and preventing infection.

When to Clean Your Hands

- Whenever your hands are visibly dirty
- Before you eat, and before touching your mouth, nose or eyes
- Before and after preparing food
- After contact with blood or body fluids, using the restroom, touching animals and pets, or changing diapers.

Proper Hand Washing

Use soap and plenty of running water if your hands are visibly soiled:

- Wet hands with warm water and work soap into a lather.
- Rub your hands vigorously for 15 seconds or longer. Get in between fingers and scrub wrists.
- Rinse your hands with warm running water and pat them dry with a clean towel.
- Use a clean paper towel to turn off the water faucet, and discard it in a trash can.

Proper Use of Hand Sanitizers

Use a hand sanitizer for routine hand cleaning only if your hands aren't visibly dirty:

- Apply the hand sanitizer to the palm of one hand.
- Rub your hands together until they're dry, making sure the sanitizer covers every spot on your hands and fingers.
- It should take about 15 seconds to rub your hands dry. If not, you didn't apply enough hand sanitizer.

Record Your Questions and Concerns

Contact your physician if you experience any signs of infection, such as fever or increased redness at a surgical or wound site. Use the space below to write any questions or concerns or signs of infection you want to share with your physician. Have this brochure on hand when you speak with your physician so you can share the list:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Infection Prevention

Continues at Home



This brochure is funded by a health education grant from The Clorox Company
For more information about how you can prevent infection, log on to **www.apic.org**



We Care Infection Prevention Continues at Home

We Care about preventing infection and avoiding the spread of germs – not only while you're in the hospital but when you go home, too. Your recovery and continued good health are important to us.

When you return home from the hospital, it's important to take the following steps to help prevent infection and avoid spreading germs that could infect you or others.

Ask everyone in your home to follow these guidelines, too.



Cover Your Sneeze or Cough

Germs are expelled into the air whenever you sneeze or cough. To prevent the spread of infection:

- Turn away from other people before coughing or sneezing.
- Cover your mouth or nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Discard the tissue in the trash.
- If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.
- Always clean your hands after coughing or sneezing.

Care For Wounds

Your skin is your body's first line of defense against germs, but an open wound leaves an easy way for germs to enter your body.

To prevent infection:

- Clean your hands before and after changing wound dressings (Wear gloves to change dressings if recommended by your doctor)
- Take special care with IV lines or other medical devices inserted into the body. If you must touch them, clean your hands first.
- And follow any specific instructions from your doctor for care of your wounds.

Disinfect Germ "Hot-Spots"

Take these steps to ensure your home is a healthy place for your recovery:

- Disinfect commonly touched hard surfaces in your home like countertops, door handles, sinks, tabletops, phones, TV remotes and baby changing tables.
- Products such as sprays and wipes that are labeled "disinfectant" are designed to kill a broad spectrum of harmful bacteria and viruses that other cleaners cannot. Follow the directions on your disinfectant's label to maximize the benefits.
- Use a clean, dry cloth or paper towel to clean and dry all surfaces. Wiping surfaces with a dirty dishcloth, sponge, or towel will only spread germs.
- Never share toothbrushes, combs, drinking glasses, utensils, razor blades, face cloths and bath towels. Germs can be passed from person to person on these personal items.

These tips are designed to help you on your road to recovery. Share this information with your family and friends.

Help spread the word that everyone plays an important role in infection prevention.



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