

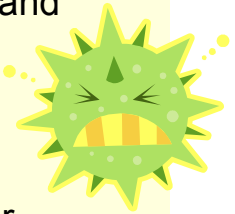
Healthy Tennessean

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ONE HAND WASHES THE OTHER

Hand washing is a simple yet important way you can prevent illness and decrease the spread of germs. Illnesses such as the common cold and the flu are easily spread through hand to hand or hand to object transmission. Touching your eyes, nose or mouth after touching an infected object (a doorknob, a remote control, a telephone, etc..) or even shaking hands with an infected person can lead to illness. Adopting a routine of frequent hand washing can greatly reduce your risk of illness. Read on to learn more about this effective prevention tool.



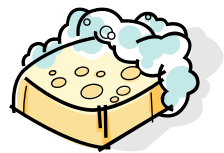
When is hand washing important?

- After using the bathroom.
- Before preparing or serving food.
- Before eating.
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- After changing a diaper or helping a child use the bathroom.
- After contact with animals (including pets and pet items).
- Before treating a wound, giving medicine or inserting contact lenses.
- When caring for someone that is ill.
- After handling garbage or other objects that could be contaminated.



What is the correct way to wash your hands?

- Wet hands with warm water.
- Apply soap (bar, liquid, etc..). The soap does not have to be "anti-bacterial" to be effective.
- Vigorously rub hands together for the time it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song through twice (~20 seconds). Don't forget under your nails and your wrists.
- Rinse hands well with water.
- Dry hands with a clean towel (preferably a disposable, one-use paper towel).
- When washing hands in public, use a paper towel to turn off the faucet, if possible.



Center for Community

What if soap and water are unavailable?

Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are an effective substitute for hand washing when soap and water are not available. Apply sanitizer to the palm of the hand and rub hands together to spread thoroughly until dry.



Remember...

Hand washing is important not only to protect yourself, but also to reduce the circulation of germs to those around you. During the cold and flu season, you can help to promote the health of your home, business, congregation or other gathering just by being conscientious about your hand hygiene. Think of it as a simple way to reach out and help your neighbor!

Wash Your Hands Frequently!

Having a hard time getting your child to wash his or her hands?

Make hand-washing fun!:

- Encourage your children to sing the birthday song or any jingle that will help them to wash for ~20 seconds.
- Make a chart and let them mark each time they wash their hands with a sticker. Allow them to work toward a special prize when they have earned a certain number of stickers.
- Try fun soaps! Liquid soaps come in all sorts of colors and scents for kids. You can also find bar soap in fun shapes.



- Be a good example— let your kids see you washing your hands, **often!**

Adapted from materials produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov), the Kids Health Web site (www.kidshealth.org) and the Mayo Clinic (www.mayoclinic.com).

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