

## WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN TO STAY HEALTHY

You can help yourself and others stay healthy by washing your hands often, especially during these key times when you are likely to get and spread germs:

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After touching garbage

### **5 STEPS**

#### **WASH YOUR HANDS THE RIGHT WAY**

Washing your hands is easy, and it's one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs. Clean hands can stop germs from spreading from one person to another and throughout an entire community—from your home and workplace to childcare facilities and hospitals. **Follow these five steps every time.**

- 1 Wet your hands** with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- 2 Lather your hands** by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- 3 Scrub your hands** for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
- 4 Rinse your hands** well under clean, running water.
- 5 Dry your hands** using a clean towel or air dry them.

**Important note:** If you are wearing rings when your hands are contaminated by any fluids, keep the rings on during the hand washing process to clear them of contaminants as well as your hands.

### **USE HAND SANITIZER ONLY WHEN YOU DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO SOAP AND WATER**

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Hand sanitizers do not get rid of all germs

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Hand sanitizers do not work well on dirty or greasy hands

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Hand sanitizers do not get rid of harmful pesticides or heavy metals

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**BE VERY CAUTIOUS** when using hand sanitizers around children as swallowing alcohol based hand sanitizers can result in alcohol poisoning after only a few mouthfuls have been swallowed

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### **HOW TO USE HAND SANITIZER**

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Apply the gel to the palm of one hand (read the label to learn the correct amount).

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**Rub your hands together.**

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Rub the gel over all surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry.

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For more information please visit CDC's Handwashing website:

**cdc.gov/handwashing**  
or call **1-800-CDC-INFO**