

## You should perform Hand Hygiene:

Hand hygiene must always be performed before and after direct patient contact. This includes touching anything within the patient curtain area, eg patient notes/observation charts.

Other examples for performing hand hygiene are:-

- When you enter or leave the ward/clinic.
- Before and after any aseptic or invasive procedure ie cannulation.
- Before handling patient food.
- Before and after putting on and removing gloves, aprons and protective eyewear.

[these are examples only, this is not an exhaustive list]



### Why perform hand hygiene?

Hand hygiene removes resident, transient micro organisms, dirt and organic matter from our hands.

## For further information or advice contact:

**Infection Control Team**  
**Ext. 3497**

Further reading:

Infection Control policies and procedures including:

**Hand Hygiene**

**Personal Protective Equipment**

available via Intranet

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# Hand Hygiene Guide

**99%**

Effective in

**30**  
secs



*Hand Hygiene is the single most effective way for patients, visitors and staff to prevent the spread of infection.*

*[based on EPIC Guidelines 2006]*

## What products should we use to perform good hand hygiene?

Liquid soap, antiseptic handwash (Hibiscrub) and Spirigel (alcohol hand rub) is widely available.

### So what's the difference between them?

#### Liquid Soap

- Will remove most micro-organisms but not all.

#### Hibiscrub (Antiseptic hand wash)

- Will remove most micro-organisms.
- Contains an antimicrobial agent which, with continual use, has a cumulative effect.
- Will remove organic matter from the hands.

### Always use water and Hibiscrub when dealing with patients with diarrhoea.

#### Spirigel (Alcohol hand rub)

- Quick and easy way to decontaminate socially clean hands, 99% effective in 30 seconds.
- Cannot be used if hands are visibly soiled.
- Do **not use if you have dealt with organic matter**, eg body fluids.

Should **not** be used in cases of Clostridium difficile associated diarrhoea or viral diarrhoea and vomiting – use water and Hibiscrub in these cases.

## Good hand hygiene means knowing when to wash hands or when to use the alcohol gel:

- Use the six stages of hand washing to wash effectively.
- Keep your nails short and clean - no nail varnish, false nails or rings with stones.
- Remove wrist watches and wrist jewellery and, if you are wearing long sleeves roll them up, before hand washing.
- Keep your hands healthy, cover any cuts with a waterproof dressing.
- If you experience any problems with your hands please contact the Occupational Health Department.
- Gloves are not a substitute for hand hygiene. Wash your hands before and after glove use.

Timely and effective hand hygiene should be practiced by all staff, especially those working in the clinical areas and those caring directly for patients.

All staff need to be good role models and remind others to do the same.

## Six Stage Handwashing Technique



1. Palm to Palm



2. Backs of hands



3. Between the fingers



4. Fingertips



5. Thumbs and wrists



6. Nails