

# Hand Hygiene for Patients, Residents, Clients, and Visitors

## Did you know...?

Germ on your hands can make you and others sick! In Canada, 8,000 to 12,000 people get infections during visits to hospitals or other healthcare places. These are called **healthcare-associated infections**, and most are spread by unclean hands. Cleaning hands is one of the **best ways to stop germs**.

## It's OK to Ask!

You have the right to ask healthcare workers if they've cleaned their hands.

You can say:

- "I know you probably washed your hands recently, but could you please clean them again in front of me?"
- "I'd like to remind you to please clean your hands."

Healthcare workers **welcome these reminders**—they help keep everyone safe.

## How to Clean Your Hands

There are two ways to clean your hands:

1. Hand sanitizer (called alcohol-based hand rub or ABHR)
  - This is fast and works well
  - Use it when your hands don't look dirty

Soap and water

- Use when your hands look dirty or are sticky
- Always wash for at least 20 seconds



*more information on other side →*

<b>Call 8-1-1</b> Healthlink BC <a href="http://www.healthlinkbc.ca">www.healthlinkbc.ca</a>	Nurse	24 hours a day	Daily	Call 8-1-1 to speak with a nurse, ask a dietitian about nutrition, or a pharmacist about your medication.
	Dietitian	9 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Mon – Fri	
	Pharmacist	5 p.m. – 9 a.m.	Daily	
	Hearing Impaired	Call 7-1-1		

# Hand Hygiene (*continued*)

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## How to Take Care of Your Hands

- Use lotion (provided by Interior Health) to prevent your hands from getting dry and cracking.
- Hand sanitizer is quick, easy, and works well to kill germs.

## Where to Find Hand Sanitizer

- Look for **labeled dispensers** on walls near doors, in hallways, and in patient rooms.
- If you can't find one, **ask a healthcare worker for help.**

## When Should You Clean Your Hands?

Before:

- Eating, drinking, or taking medicine
- Touching any wounds, bandages, or tubes

After:

- Coughing, sneezing, or touching your nose or mouth
- Using the toilet, bedpan, or commode

Also:

- When entering or leaving a room
- If your hands look dirty
- If you are not sure your hands are clean
- When entering or leaving a hospital or care facility
- When asked by a healthcare worker

## When Do Healthcare Workers Clean Their Hands?

Before:

- Touching you or anything near you
- Touching wounds, bandages, or tubes
- Doing a clean medical procedure
- Putting on gloves
- Preparing food or medicine

After:

- Providing care
- Completing a procedure
- Removing gloves
- Leaving the patient space

## Additional Resources

There are many resources on the internet but not all will have accurate information. Below is a list of trusted internet resources for hand hygiene education. Open camera on phone, focus on image (QR Code), tap website link to open document.

### BCCDC public website

Hand Hygiene

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/prevention-public-health/hand-hygiene>



### PICNet public website

Patient Hand Hygiene

[PICNet-PatientHandHygiene-Brochure.pdf](#)

