



HOW TO WASH HANDS

The most important thing you can do to prevent illness is wash your hands. By frequently washing your hands you wash away germs picked up from other people, contaminated surfaces, or animals and animal waste.

Here is how to wash your hands:

- Wet hands, using warm, running water and soap, preferably liquid.
- Making sure you have lots of bubbles, rub hands together vigorously for at least 15 seconds.
- Wash under fingernails, between fingers, backs of hands and wrists.
- Rinse hands under warm, running water.

In public bathrooms:

- Leave water running after washing hands.
- Using single use towel or air dryer, dry hands.
- If towel dispenser has handles, roll towel down prior to washing hands. This keeps you from picking up germs from the handle after washing hands.
- Turn faucet off using towel.
- Open door using towel.
- Discard towel.
- In the home, change hand towels often.

When should you wash your hands?

- After using the bathroom or changing a diaper
- After handling anything soiled with any body fluid
- After you clean up messes
- After caring for an ill child or family member
- Before and after preparing or serving food
- Before and after eating and drinking

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information, call your health care provider.