

HAND HYGIENE

Policy No. 7-009

PURPOSE

To prevent cross-contamination and home care-acquired infections.

POLICY

Personnel providing care in the home setting will regularly wash their hands, per the most recently published CDC regulations and guidelines for hand hygiene in healthcare settings.

When hands are visibly dirty, contaminated with proteinaceous material, or are visibly soiled with blood or other body fluids, they should be washed with either a non-antimicrobial or antimicrobial soap and water.

When hands are not visibly soiled, they should be washed using an alcohol-based hand rub for routinely decontaminating hands. An alternative to use of an alcohol based hand rub is to wash hands with an antimicrobial soap and water.

PROCEDURE

Hand decontamination with an alcohol-based hand rub

Equipment: Organization-approved, alcohol-based hand rub which conforms to CDC Guideline for Hand Hygiene.

1. Apply alcohol-based hand rub product to palm of one (1) hand and rub hands together, covering all surfaces of hands and fingers (including under nails) until hands are dry.
2. The volume of product needed to reduce the number of bacteria on hands will vary by product, so product directions must be followed.
3. Hand decontamination using an alcohol-based hand rub should be performed:
 - A. Before having direct contact with patients
 - B. Before donning sterile gloves when performing sterile procedures; before inserting indwelling urinary catheters, peripheral vascular catheters, or other invasive devices
 - C. After contact with a patient's intact skin (when taking a pulse, blood pressure or lifting a patient)
 - D. After contact with body fluids or excretions, mucous membranes, non-intact skin, and wound dressings, if hands are not visibly contaminated.
 - E. When moving from a contaminated body site to a clean body site during patient care.

- F. After contact with inanimate objects (including medical equipment) in the immediate vicinity of the patient.
 - G. After removing gloves.
4. At any time, personnel may choose to wash their hands with soap and running water in addition to using the alcohol-based hand rub, especially if personnel feel there is a “build-up” on the hands after repeated use of the alcohol-based hand rub.

Hand Washing with Soap and Water

Equipment: Paper towels and liquid soap; if water and liquid soap are not available, waterless hand washing products will be used.

1. Wet hands and apply the soap, and rub hands together vigorously; avoid use of hot water because repeated exposure to hot water may increase risk of dermatitis.
2. Wash hands for at least 20 seconds covering all surfaces of the hands and fingers.
3. Rinse with warm water and dry the hands with a disposable towel from the fingers toward the forearm.
4. Use a dry disposable towel to turn off faucet.
5. Hand washing using soap and water should be performed:
 - A. Before eating
 - B. After using the restroom
 - C. When hands are visibly dirty or contaminated
 - D. If exposure to *Bacillus anthracis* is suspected or proven