

# STAND-UP TALK



## Let's Talk About Washing Our Hands

**Let's talk about some hazards associated with poor hand hygiene.**

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### WHY IS HAND WASHING IMPORTANT?

Many infections, such as the common cold and the flu, are caused by spreading germs from person to person and good hand hygiene is the most effective way to stop infections spreading.

Even when your hands look clean, they can still be carrying germs and this is why when we touch other people or objects, we can spread germs without even realising it.

A 2018 report by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) found that up to 97 percent of us wash our hands incorrectly. In one workplace study, employees who were trained in handwashing and hand sanitation practices used 20% percent fewer sick days due to improved hygiene.

### HOW OFTEN SHOULD I WAS MY HANDS?

If you wash your hands less than six times a day you could be considered to be lacking basic hygiene standards.

On average you should be washing your hands at least 11 times a day (3 x before eating, 8 x after using the toilet).

There are also other situations which are important to be washing your hands. They include after touching animals, food preparation (especially raw meat, poultry and fish), before and after treating a wound.

Additionally, it is very important to wash your hands thoroughly after you sneeze or cough as they are some of the main ways of spreading germs and disease - something we all want to prevent.

### WHAT KINDS OF SOAP WORK BEST?

When it comes to what soap is best to use, the answer might surprise you. So-called "antibacterial" soaps don't necessarily kill more germs than regular soaps.

Use any liquid, powder, or bar soap you have available to wash your hands. If you're washing your hands as frequently as you should be, you might want to look for a soap that's moisturizing or marked as "gentle" on your skin to prevent drying out your hands.

### WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO WASH HANDS? 42 SECONDS THAT CAN CHANGE YOUR HEALTH

Just lathering your hands with soap, rubbing them vigorously for 20 seconds and rinsing is not the most effective way to clean them. Research suggests that the WHO (World Health Organisation) 6 Step process is the most efficient at killing bacteria. Did you know that the hand washing process from start to finish takes about 42 seconds and that includes scrubbing your hands for 20 seconds - that's about as long as it takes to sing happy birthday twice. It's no time at all to help keep infection down in our workplace.

STEPS: First, wet your hands first before applying any soap. Apply soap and then rub your hands as shown below for 20 seconds.



Palm to Palm



Right palm over back of left hand.  
Left palm over back of right hand



Palm to palm fingers interlaced



Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlaced.



Rotational rubbing of right thumb clasped over left palm and left palm over right palm



Rotational rubbing backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in palm of left and vice versa

Rinse off your hands thoroughly and then dry with a disposable hand towel.

Once hands are dry, use the hand towel to turn off the faucet if it is manually operated.

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### Record of EHS Stand-Up Meeting

#### Meeting details

Meeting held at:	Date:
Meeting conducted by:	Signed:

#### Persons attending

Name	Signature	Name	Signature

#### Action required

Action	Responsible	Timeframe

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### Stand Up Talk Meeting Outline

1	<b>FOLLOW UP</b>	Follow-up on any outstanding issues from the previous meeting.
2	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	Briefly introduce the topic (in 1-2 minutes) for employees. If appropriate, report on any examples of when and where in the workplace hand hygiene is critical.
3	<b>ADVISE</b>	Bacteria and viruses are easily transmitted through almost everything you touch. It's near impossible to avoid introducing microscopic particles that'll attack your immune system into your body on a daily basis. That's why your best line of defence is to wash your hands often.
4	<b>ASK</b>	What can we do to ensure we have a good hand hygiene in our workplace?
5	<b>ADVISE</b>	<p><b>SOME OBSTACLES TO GOOD HAND HYGIENE:</b> Despite the clear need for good hand hygiene, there are many obstacles that may prevent it from becoming routine in our workplace. Some of these can be put down to poor perception - such as the work need taking priority over the need to wash hands; a perception that gloves are an effective barrier; or a lack of understanding of cross contamination risk.</p> <p>Other barriers could also include not enough hand washing stations, lack of policy, or simple forgetfulness.</p> <p>Regardless of any obstacles, hand hygiene must become a priority as it is one of the most effective ways of stopping the spread of infection.</p>
6	<b>NOTES</b>	Note any issues that require follow-up.
7	<b>THANKS</b>	Thank everyone for their time and attention.



- Conduct regular SAOs inspections to identify hand washing hygiene status.