

## **WHAT ABOUT FINGERNAILS, NAIL POLISH AND JEWELRY?**

- Thousands of germs can survive under and around fingernails. Be sure to clean areas under fingernails if they are visibly dirty.
- Chipped nail polish may harbor germs.
- Persons with artificial nails will have more germs under and around nails than those who do not wear them.
- Hand/arm jewelry, nail enhancements/artificial nails can trap germs and prevent removal during hand hygiene. They have been linked to transmission of infection and must not be worn by health care providers.
- Alcohol use for medicinal purposes such as ABHR is allowed by Islam

***IT'S OK TO ASK NURSES, DOCTORS AND  
OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IF  
THEY HAVE CLEANED THEIR HANDS***

***ASK VISITORS IF THEY HAVE WASHED  
THEIR HANDS***



**HAND HYGIENE  
THE BEST  
WAY TO PREVENT  
INFECTION**

July 2014

**HAND  
HYGIENE**

**INFECTION PREVENTION  
& CONTROL PROGRAM**

## **WHAT IS HAND HYGIENE?**

Hand hygiene is the best way to stop the spread of germs, which can cause infections.

Germs live on your hands or on objects. You can spread germs and infections when you have not washed your hands.

Hand hygiene refers to washing your hands with soap and water or using an alcohol hand rub to clean your hands.

Washing hands helps to physically remove the germs by friction, and then rinse them down the drain.

Alcohol hand rub kills 99.99% of most common germs that may cause illness.

## **WHEN SHOULD YOU CLEAN YOUR HANDS?**

- When hands are visibly dirty
- Before you eat
- Before you prepare food items
- After touching raw meats like chicken or beef
- After contact with any body fluids like blood, urine or vomit
- After changing infant or adult diapers
- After touching animal and pets
- After using the washroom
- After blowing your nose

## **HAND HYGIENE IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN A HEALTH CARE SETTING:**

- When entering a room
- Before and after providing care
- When providing care to more than one individual
- Before putting on gloves
- After removing gloves
- Upon leaving the room

## **WHAT IS AN ALCOHOL-BASED HAND RUB (ABHR)?**

- It is a hand disinfectant-must contain 70-90% alcohol
- It can be used for routine cleaning of hands when they are not visibly soiled.
- Unless otherwise advised by your health care provider or if hands are visibly dirty **ABHR** is the preferred method of Hand Hygiene.

## **HOW IS IT APPLIED?**

- Apply 1 pump of alcohol hand rub to palm of one hand
- Rub hands together
- Spread hand rub thoroughly over hands, as you would if you were washing them
- Rub until hands are dry

## **WHEN SHOULD YOU WASH YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER?**

- Roll up sleeves and remove jewelry
- Wet hands with warm water
- Apply soap to hands
- Rub hands vigorously together for 15-30 seconds
- Cover all surfaces of hands, between fingers and around thumbs
- To make sure you are washing long enough, try singing the "Happy Birthday Song" twice
- Rinse hands well to remove soap residue
- Pat hands dry with a paper towel
- Use paper towel to turn off tap

**HAND HYGIENE IS  
EVERYONE'S  
RESPONSIBILITY.**