

We assume everyone knows how to wash their hands, but many workers don't realize how important hand washing can be in the prevention of disease.

The best defense against the spread of illness or skin ailments is to prevent them where possible by washing them often, using barrier creams, and wearing gloves.

Follow these 5 steps every time you wash your hands:

1. **Wet your hands** with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. **Lather your hands** by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. **Scrub your hands** for at least 20 seconds.
4. **Rinse your hands** well under clean, running water.
5. **Dry your hands** using a clean towel or air dry them.

Use Hand Sanitizer When You Can't Use Soap and Water

If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in many situations. However, sanitizers do not get rid of all types of germs. Hand sanitizers may not be as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.

How to use hand sanitizer:

1. **Apply the gel product** to the palm of one hand.
2. **Rub your hands together.**
3. **Rub the gel over all the surfaces** of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry. This should take around 20 seconds.

When should you wash your hands?

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick with vomiting or **diarrhea**
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage