

Hand Hygiene and Controlling Germs

You will notice your care team members washing their hands or using hand sanitizer during their visit with you. Hand hygiene is the most important thing we can all do to reduce the spread of germs.

When to wash your hands:

- Before and after close contact with people who are sick
- After contact with bodily fluids or things with bodily fluids on them, such as towels, sheets, wipes, and briefs.
- Before and after providing care, such as emptying a bed pan or administering medicine.
- After using the restroom.
- Covering a cough, sneeze, or blowing your nose.
- Before or after wearing gloves while giving care.
- Before preparing or eating meals, or preparing medications.
- After contact with pets.

How to wash your hands:

- Use warm running water.
- Wet hands and use soap, liquid if possible.
- Scrub hands for at least 20 seconds.
- Be sure to include fingernails and between fingers. If you wear rings, spend extra time scrubbing them.
- Rinse hands well.
- Dry hands gently with a paper towel or clean cloth.
- Turn the water off with the towel, not your clean hands.
- If soap and water are not available, use a 62% alcohol-based hand rub. **Do not use 62% alcohol-based hand rub if using oxygen- contact your care team.**

Gloves should be worn with any direct contact with bodily fluids: mucous, blood, vomit, urine or stool, and when handling soiled items.