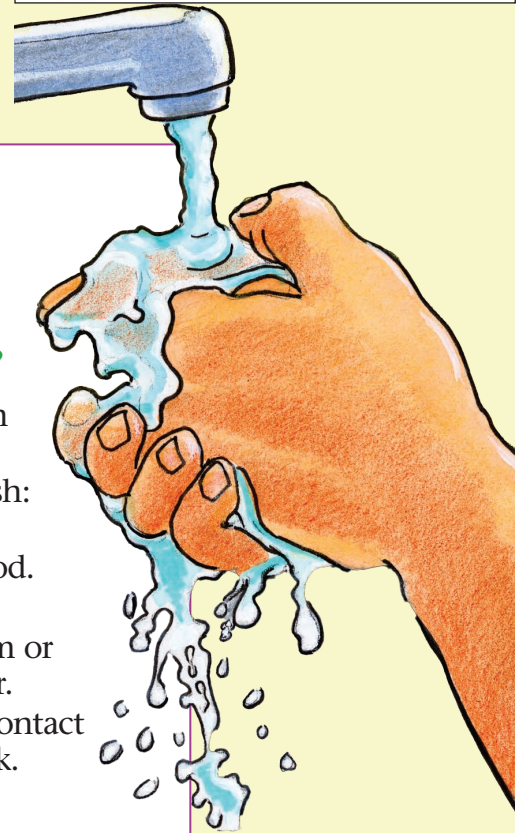


Hand Washing

to Avoid Colds, Flu and Other Infections



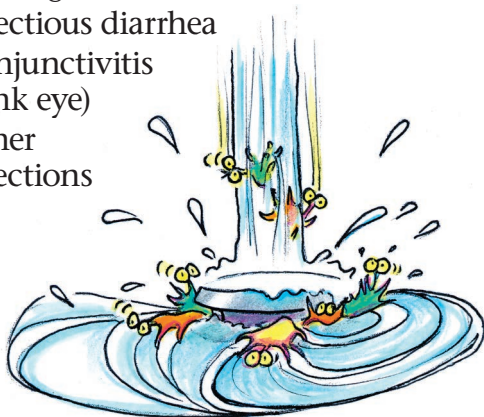
Getting sick is no fun. It may mean visits to the doctor and missing work or school. While it is not possible to avoid all illnesses, hand washing can help. It is one easy way to lower your risk of getting sick.

Why should you wash your hands?

- ✓ Our hands pick up germs from many places:
 - Other people.
 - Surfaces such as desks, doorknobs, telephones and money.
 - Animals and their waste.
- ✓ You can get sick when you touch a surface that has germs and then touch your nose, mouth or eyes.
- ✓ Hand washing removes the germs on your hands that can make you sick.

Wash away the germs.

- ✓ Hand washing can take away germs that cause:
 - Colds and flu
 - COVID-19
 - Hepatitis A
 - Meningitis
 - Infectious diarrhea
 - Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
 - Other infections



When should you wash?

- ✓ Washing your hands often is a good habit.
- ✓ It is very important to wash:
 - Before, during and after cooking or preparing food.
 - Before eating.
 - After using the bathroom or changing a baby's diaper.
 - When you are in close contact with a person who is sick.
 - After you cough, sneeze or blow your nose.
 - When your hands look dirty.
 - After touching animals or handling their waste.
 - Before and after treating a cut or wound.

Teach children healthy habits, too!

- ✓ Germs spread easily in schools and daycare settings. It is important to:
 - Show children how to wash their hands.
 - Explain how good hand washing will help keep them and others from getting sick.
 - Make it fun! Have them wash for about as long as it takes to sing the "ABC" song.



Soap up!

- ✓ Wet your hands and use plenty of liquid or bar soap.
- ✓ Scrub all surfaces of your hands.
- ✓ Wash for about 20 seconds.
- ✓ Remember: It is the soap and scrubbing that remove the germs.

When there is no soap and water...

- ✓ Use alcohol-based hand sanitizers or wipes that contain at least 60% alcohol.
- ✓ These products contain germ-killing alcohol, and they do not need water to work.



Simple steps to staying healthy.

Washing your hands helps prevent the spread of colds, flu and other illnesses. Here are some other things you can do:

- ✓ Avoid touching your nose, mouth and eyes.
- ✓ If possible, avoid close contact with people who have a cold or the flu.
- ✓ Get regular exercise, plenty of sleep, and eat a balanced, healthy diet.
- ✓ Talk to your doctor about flu vaccines.



You've heard it before:

Washing your hands is a great way to lower your chances of getting the flu, colds and other infections. For more information about hand washing and preventing illness, talk to your health care provider.



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