

Hand washing

Why is hand washing important?

Hand washing is **the most** important thing we all can do to prevent the spread of germs. We don't want germs to spread to you, your child, other patients, visitors, or staff.

When should hands be washed?

- When entering and before leaving the room.
- After changing diapers or using the bathroom.
- Before and after eating or feeding your child.
- After sneezing or coughing.
- When they look dirty.

How should hands be washed?

Use hand sanitizer anytime hands are not visibly dirty.

Hands must be washed with soap and water if:

- Your hands are dirty.
- A patient has an active *Clostridium difficile* (C. diff), Cryptosporidiosis, or Norovirus infection because hand sanitizer does not kill these germs.
- After using the bathroom or changing a diaper.
- Hand sanitizer has been used more than 4 times in a row.

Who should wash their hands?

- All staff must wash their hands when they enter the room, leave the room, and after taking off gloves. Please remind staff if they forget to do so.
- Visitors should also wash their hands when they enter and leave a patient's room. Please make sure anyone coming into a patient's room washes their hands.
- Your child's hands should always be washed:
 - After using the bathroom.
 - Before and after eating.

Remember - Clean hands will keep you and your child safe. It will also prevent other children, families and staff in the hospital from getting sick as well.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any concerns or if your child has special health care needs not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.