



## REMINDER

### Hand Washing

#### Description of Issue and Importance

Hand washing, when done correctly, is the **single most effective way to prevent the spread of transferable diseases**. It is best to wash your hands with soap and clean running water.

#### Recommended Action and Prevention Strategy

**Use proper procedures for hand washing:**

- **Wet your hands** with clean, running water (warm or cold).
- **Lather your hands** by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- **Scrub your hands** for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
- **Rinse your hands** well under clean, running water.
- **Dry your hands** using a clean towel or air dry them, use a paper towel to turn off the faucet, and then throw it away.

**Use proper procedures for alcohol-based hand sanitizer:**

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. Alcohol-based hand rubs can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in some situations, but sanitizers *do not eliminate all types of germs*.

- Apply the product to the palm of one hand.
- Rub your hands together.
- Rub the product over all surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry.



Always wash your hands before:

- Preparing and giving medications
- Preparing food and eating
- Treating wounds
- Touching a sick or injured individual
- Inserting or removing contact lenses

Always wash your hands after:

- Preparing food, especially raw meat or poultry
- Using the toilet
- Changing a diaper
- Touching an animal or animal toys, leashes, or waste
- Blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing into your hands
- Treating wounds
- Touching an individual who is sick or injured
- Handling garbage or something that could be contaminated, such as a cleaning cloth or soiled shoes

## References

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Handwashing: Clean hands saves lives. Retrieved 10/09/2015 from <http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html>*

*Mayo Clinic. Hand washing: Do's and don'ts. Retrieved 10/09/2015 from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/hand-washing/art-20046253>*

*U.S. Food and Drug Administration. FDA Taking closer look at 'antibacterial' soap. Retrieved 10/28/2015 from <http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm378393.htm>*