



Practicing hand hygiene is a simple yet effective way to prevent infections. Cleaning your hands can prevent the spread of germs, including those that are resistant to antibiotics and are becoming difficult, if not impossible, to treat. On average, healthcare providers clean their hands less than half of the times they should. On any given day, about one in 25 hospital patients has at least one healthcare-associated infection.

WHY IS HAND HYGIENE IMPORTANT?

- Infections are a serious problem in healthcare facilities.
- Every year, an estimated 2 million patients get a hospital-related infection.
- 90,000 die from their infection.
- Many infections are transmitted on the hands of healthcare personnel.
- Hand hygiene is part of Standard Precautions.
- It can reduce the transmission of healthcare-associated infections – to your patients and to you.

STANDARD PRECAUTIONS INCLUDE:

- Hand hygiene (handwashing with soap and water or use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) before and after patient contact and after contact with the immediate patient care environment.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) when exposure to blood, body fluids, excretions, secretions (except sweat), mucous membranes, or non-intact skin is anticipated. PPE includes: ◦Gloves – when hand contamination is anticipated.
- Masks and eye protection – when splashes may occur.
- Gowns – when soiling of clothes may occur.

