

Hand Hygiene

Caredemy
Online Training Academy



CAREDEMY
ONLINE SKILLS FOR CARE

Course Name:

- *Hand Hygiene*

Course Description:

- *This course will give an overview of the implications of not using proper hand hygiene, how to perform proper hand hygiene, and when to use proper hand hygiene.*

Course Learning Objectives:

At the end of this course, the learner will be able to:

- *Identify reasons why hand hygiene is important*
- *Describe who should be concerned with hand hygiene*
- *Describe the steps to proper hand hygiene*
- *Identify the 5 moments for hand hygiene*

Target Audience:

- *Health and social care workers*

Course Requirements:

- *Participants must complete all learning modules and pass the multiple-choice course assessment.*

Core Clinical Framework:

- *This course meets the outcomes of the framework.*



The Importance of Hand Hygiene

Each year, thousands of people die across the globe from infections acquired while receiving health care. Our hands are the primary pathway of germ transmission during health care delivery. Hand hygiene is an important practice to avoid the transmission of germs. Proper hand hygiene can help prevent healthcare-associated infections.

Any health or social care worker, caregiver, or individual involved in the direct or indirect care of a person should be concerned about hand hygiene and be able to perform it correctly.

How Are Hands Cleaned?

Hands are cleaned in two ways:

1. Alcohol-based rub
 - Hands are cleaned by rubbing them with an alcohol-based formulation when hands are not visibly soiled. Alcohol-based rubs are effective for routine hygienic hand antisepsis, is fast, and is better tolerated by our hands than washing with soap and water.
2. Soap and water
 - When hands are visibly dirty or visibly soiled with blood, other body fluids, or after using the toilet, they should be washed with soap and water. If exposure to a spore-forming pathogen is suspected or proven, such as an outbreak of *Clostridium difficile*, hand washing with soap and water is preferred.



How to Use Alcohol-based Handrub

The following are the steps provided by the World Health Organization (2019) to follow when using an alcohol-based handrub:

1. Apply a palmful of the alcohol-based handrub into a cupped hand, covering all surfaces
2. Rub hands together, palm to palm
3. Rub right palm over the top (dorsum) of the left hand with interlaced fingers, then repeat on the other side
4. Rub hands together palm to palm with fingers interlaced
5. Rub the backs of the fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked
6. Rub the left thumb rotationally against the clasped palm of the right hand and vice versa
7. Rotationally rub the left palm with the tips of the right fingers and vice versa
8. Once dry your hands are safe. The entire procedure should take between 20-30 seconds



How to Wash Hands with Soap and Water

The following are the steps provided by the World Health Organization (2019) to follow when washing hands with soap and water:

1. Wet hands with water
2. Apply enough soap to cover your entire hand surface
3. Rub hands together, palm to palm
4. Rub right palm over the top (dorsum) of the left hand with interlaced fingers, then repeat on the other side
5. Rub hands together palm to palm with fingers interlaced
6. Rub the backs of the fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked
7. Rub the left thumb rotationally against the clasped palm of the right hand and vice versa
8. Rotationally rub the left palm with the tips of the right fingers and vice versa
9. Rinse hands with water
10. Dry hands with a single use towel
11. Use towel to turn off the faucet
12. Your hands are now safe. This procedure should take between 40-60 seconds



Caring for Your Hands

Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub can be harsh on hands over time. You should care for your hands by using a protective hand cream or lotion at least once per day. Do not routinely wash your hands with soap and water before or after using an alcohol-based handrub. The water you use to wash your hands should not be too hot. After using an alcohol-based handrub or washing your hands, you should allow your hands to fully dry before putting on gloves.

Fingernails

When in direct contact with patients, you should not wear artificial fingernails or extenders. You should keep your natural nails short. This is done to prevent the spread of germs that may cause infection.

5 Moments for Hand Hygiene

There are 5 key moments for hand hygiene when caring for patients:

1. Before touching a patient
2. Before clean/aseptic procedure
3. After body fluid exposure risk
4. After touching a patient
5. After touching patient surroundings



Before Touching a Patient

Hand hygiene is important before touching a patient to protect the patient against colonization or exogenous infection by germs carried on your hands. You should always clean your hands prior to touching a patient when approaching them. This applies in the following scenarios:

- Before shaking hands, or touching a child's forehead
- Before helping a patient with personal care activities
- Before delivering care or other non-invasive treatment such as applying an oxygen mask
- Before performing a physical non-invasive examination, such as taking blood pressure

Before Clean/Aseptic Procedure

Hand hygiene is important before clean/aseptic procedure to protect the patient against infection from harmful germs, including germs they may be carrying on their own body. You should clean your hands immediately before assessing a critical site with infection risk for the patient, such as non-intact skin or a mucous membrane. The following scenarios are examples of clean/aseptic procedures:

- Before examining the mouth, nose, or ear, suctioning mucous, brushing a patient's teeth, instilling eye drops, or performing a digital vaginal or rectal examination
- Prior to dressing a wound, making a percutaneous injection, or applying ointment
- Before inserting an invasive medical device, or opening any circuit of an invasive medical device
- Before preparing medication, food, pharmaceutical products, or sterile materials



After Body Fluid Exposure Risk

Hand hygiene is important after body fluid exposure risk to protect you and the healthcare environment from colonization or infection from harmful germs. You should clean your hands as soon as the tasks involving exposure risk to body fluids has been completed or after removal of gloves. This applies when:

- Contact with a mucous membrane and with non-intact skin ends
- After inserting an invasive medical device, disrupting and opening an invasive circuit, or after percutaneous injection or puncture
- After removing an invasive medical device
- After removing any personal protective equipment (dressings, sanitary towels, gauze, etc.)
- After handling a sample containing organic mater, cleaning excreta, or other body fluids, or after cleaning contaminated surfaces

After Touching a Patient

Hand hygiene is important after touching a patient to protect you and the healthcare environment from colonization or infection from harmful germs. You should always clean your hands after leaving the patient's side, following touching the patient. This applies in the following scenarios:

- After touching a child's forehead or shaking hands
- After assisting the patient with personal care activities
- After delivering care or other non-invasive treatment
- After changing linens, applying an oxygen mask, or giving a massage
- After performing a physical, non-invasive examination, such as taking pulse



After Touching Patient Surroundings

Hand hygiene is important after touching a patient's surroundings to protect yourself and the healthcare environment from harmful germs. You should always clean your hands after touching any object or furniture when leaving the patient surroundings, without having ever touched the patient. This applies after:

- Having contact with the patient's immediate surroundings, such as changing bed linens, holding a bed rail, or cleaning a bedside table
- After a care activity, such as clearing a monitoring alarm
- After having contact with surfaces or objects, such as leaning against a bed (ideally you should avoid unnecessary activities)

Medical Glove Use

Using gloves does not replace the need for hand hygiene. You should perform hand hygiene when appropriate regardless of glove use. Gloves should be removed to perform hand hygiene, and gloves should be discarded after each task. Gloves should only be worn when indicated, otherwise they may become a risk for germ transmission. The following are glove types and their indicated use:

1. Sterile gloves
 - Any surgical procedure, vaginal delivery, invasive radiological procedure, performing vascular access and procedures, or preparing total parental nutrition and chemotherapeutic agents
2. Examination gloves
 - The potential for touching blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, and items visibly soiled by body fluids exists
3. Gloves not indicated
 - No potential for exposure to blood or body fluids or a contaminated environment exists (e.g. taking blood pressure, transporting a patient, using the phone)

