

# Hand Hygiene

An information guide



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## Hand Hygiene

Hand hygiene is the most effective way for patients, visitors and staff to prevent the spread of infection.

## Why we should wash our hands

During the course of a normal day your hands are used to touch and handle many things. Many infection control problems are caused by micro-organisms (germs) which are picked up on your hands during everyday activities.

## What to do

To prevent germs spreading, there are two ways to clean your hands whilst in hospital. These are:

- Soap and water
- Alcohol hand rub

## Using the alcohol hand rub

These kill about 99% of germs in around 30 seconds and dry naturally on the skin. Hand rub is provided inside the entrance to wards and departments and by beds or treatment areas. It is very convenient to use and you don't need to be near a sink to effectively clean your hands. It is a quick and effective alternative to soap and water.

## **It is safe to use the alcohol hand rub:**

- On entering and leaving a ward or department if visiting
- As an alternative to soap and water if hands are visibly clean.

However, soap and water is recommended after visiting the toilet, especially if you are a patient and have had some diarrhoea.

## **Please**

Do not hesitate to ask the nurse caring for you to help you wash your hands before meals and after using the toilet.

This is an important part of your care while you are in hospital and nursing staff will be pleased to assist you. Being confined to your bed should not be a reason for you not to wash your hands. Wet wipes will be provided for you.

To help reduce hospital acquired infection, please ask all healthcare workers when caring for you, if they have washed their hands or used the alcohol hand rub, prior to carrying out any direct care. This ensures that you are protected from the spread of infection.

## **What you can do**

Whilst you are a patient in hospital we want to encourage you to clean your hands to prevent you from acquiring an infection. Many infections occur because hands are not clean.

As a patient there are some specific times when you should clean your hands as shown below these are the 5 moments for patient hand hygiene.

## When to clean your hands...



## How to use a hand wipe...



Produced in association with the Department of Infection Control  
Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, acknowledging  
W.H.G. 5 Moments Campaign.



Please ask a member of staff if you require any help with cleaning your hands during your stay in hospital.

**For further information please contact the Infection Control Team**

**Fairfield General Hospital**

Telephone: 0161 778 2428

Internally: 82428

**North Manchester General Hospital**

Telephone: 0161 720 2935

Internally: 42935

**The Royal Oldham Hospital**

Telephone: 0161 656 1922 / 0161 627 8771

Internally: 71922 / 78771

**Rochdale Infirmary**

Telephone: 01706 906 150

Internally: 56150

## References

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epic 3: National Evidence-Based Guidelines for Preventing Healthcare-Associated Infections in NHS Hospitals in England.

Journal of Hospital Infection 8651(2014)51-570



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