

CLEAN HANDS SAVE LIVES

Get into the habit.



Did you know?

- Hospital-associated infections (HAIs) are the most frequent adverse events that happen in healthcare. These infections harm patients, visitors, and team members, and can even cause death.
- On any given day, one in 31 hospital patients in the U.S. has an HAI, and over 1 million HAIs are reported annually (CDC).
- Approximately 30% of patients in intensive care acquire at least one HAI with substantial associated morbidity and mortality (World Health Organization).
- Studies show that some health care providers clean their hands less than half of the time they should (CDC).

What can you do to protect patients and yourself?

At UVA Health, our patients are the center of all we do. **Practicing consistent hand hygiene is the most important thing you can do to prevent HAIs in patients.** It's also the best way to protect yourself from infection.

Hand Hygiene Myths and Facts

MYTH: I don't need to clean my hands if I wear gloves.

FACT: Gloves are not a substitute for hand hygiene. Gloves protect the team member, but not the patient. When uncleaned hands touch gloves, the outside of the gloves can become contaminated and spread microorganisms to patients, devices, and the environment.

MYTH: There is no difference between cleaning with alcohol-based hand rub and washing with soap and water in healthcare settings.

FACT: While soap and water must be used in certain situations, alcohol-based hand sanitizer is preferred for cleaning your hands when they are not visibly dirty because it is more effective at killing germs (including multi-drug resistant germs) than soap/water and is easier to use.

MYTH: Alcohol-based hand rub contributes to anti-microbial and antibiotic resistance.

FACT: Alcohol-based hand rub does not contribute to anti-microbial or antibiotic resistance. They kill germs by destroying the proteins and protective outer membrane that germs need to survive. Antibiotic resistance happens when germs develop the ability to defeat the drugs designed to kill them.

Get Into the Habit | Always clean your hands upon entering/exiting patient spaces

Before

- Donning gloves
- Handling patient care devices
- Performing aseptic tasks
- Collecting specimens
- Performing invasive procedures
- Preparing/administering medications
- Preparing/serving food

After

- Doffing gloves
- Setting down items carried in/out of patient spaces
- Cleaning patient equipment
- Caring for patients with green handwashing signs
- Between different care activities on the same patient (e.g., dirty to clean task)

Hand Hygiene Guidelines

At UVA Health, we strive for a minimum 90% compliance rate with the CDC's hand hygiene guidelines.

Are you following these guidelines at least 90% of the time?

Technique

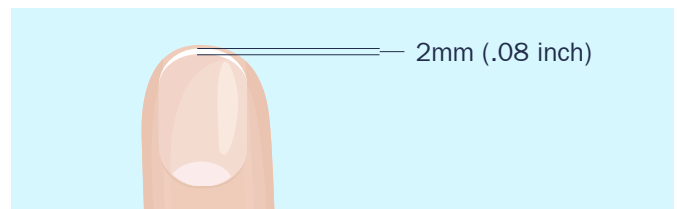
- Rub alcohol sanitizer well over fingers, fingernails, finger webs, and backs of hands until the alcohol has dried. Use enough to require at least 20 seconds to dry.
- Wet hands, use one pump of soap and rub over fingers, fingernails, finger webs, and backs of hands for at least 20 seconds, rinse well, use paper towel to 1) pat hands dry (do not rub) and 2) turn off water.

Glove Use

- Hands should be cleaned before donning and after doffing gloves.
- Gloves should not be worn beyond the threshold of the patient room/space.
- Hand sanitizer should not be applied to gloves as it can wear down the material, give a false sense of cleanliness, and pose an infection risk.
- It is safe to remove gloves in an isolation room, clean hands, and re-glove to perform a procedure or task to prevent cross contamination.
- Gloves are not required for routine patient care activities if contact is limited to a patient's intact skin.
- Clean, non-sterile gloves should be worn if team members anticipate potential exposure to blood or other body fluids.

Fingernails

- Artificial nails and long natural nails have been associated with HAI outbreaks and patient deaths caused by bacteria and yeast.
- The following applies to team members who provide direct patient care, have patient contact, prepare items/products used by patients, prepare instruments for sterile procedures, prepare sterile pharmaceuticals, prepare/handle food, or are involved in cleaning patient care areas.



- Nails are to be kept natural, clean, and no longer than 2mm.
- Artificial nails, nail extenders (of any type), embedded enhancements, and gel/shellac nail polish are prohibited. Nail polish, if worn, must be in good condition (i.e., not peeling, chipping, or lifting).
- Team members performing a surgical scrub, high level disinfection, or sterilization may not wear nail polish.

Products

- It is important to use only UVA Health-approved hand hygiene products from Ecolab. These products are formulated to work together and not interact with other products in use at UVA Health to make them less effective.
- Non-hospital approved lotions and soaps often contain fragrances and other chemicals that can cause allergies.