



SECTIONS

HAND HYGIENE

YOUR 4 MOMENTS FOR HAND HYGIENE

Scenarios

MOMENT 1 – BEFORE INITIAL PATIENT/PATIENT ENVIRONMENT CONTACT

Clean your hands when entering before touching the patient or any object or furniture in the patient's environment to protect the patient/patient environment from harmful organisms carried on your hands.

Some examples may be:

- shaking hands, stroking an arm
- helping a patient to move around, get washed, giving a massage
- taking pulse, blood pressure, chest auscultation, abdominal palpation
- before adjusting an IV rate

MOMENT 2 – BEFORE ASEPTIC PROCEDURE

Clean your hands immediately before any aseptic procedure to protect the patient against harmful organisms, including the patient's own organisms, entering his or her body.

Some examples may be:

- oral/dental care, giving eye drops, secretion aspiration
- skin lesion care, wound dressing, subcutaneous injection
- catheter insertion, opening a vascular access system or a draining system
- preparation of medication, dressing sets

MOMENT 3 – AFTER BODY FLUID EXPOSURE RISK

Clean your hands immediately after an exposure risk to body fluids (and after glove removal) to protect yourself and the health care environment from harmful patient organisms.

Some examples may be:

- oral/dental care, giving eye drops, secretion aspiration
- skin lesion care, wound dressing, subcutaneous injection
- drawing and manipulating any fluid sample, opening a draining system, endotracheal tube insertion and removal
- cleaning up urine, faeces, vomit, handling waste (bandages, napkin, incontinence pads), cleaning of contaminated and visibly soiled material or areas (bathroom, medical instruments)

MOMENT 4 – AFTER PATIENT/PATIENT ENVIRONMENT CONTACT

Clean your hands when leaving after touching patient or any object or furniture in the patient's environment to protect yourself and the health care environment from harmful patient organisms.

Some examples may be:

- shaking hands, stroking an arm
- helping a patient to move around, get washed, giving a massage
- taking pulse, blood pressure, chest auscultation, abdominal palpation
- changing bed linen
- perfusion speed adjustment
- monitoring alarm
- holding a bed rail
- clearing the bedside table

HOW TO HAND RUB AND HANDWASH

Alcohol-based hand rub is the preferred method for cleaning hands. It is better than washing hands (even with antibacterial soap) when hands are not visibly soiled.

EXCEPTION: When dealing with spore-forming bacteria (e.g., *Clostridium difficile*), handwashing is preferred, as alcohol-based hand rubs have limited effectiveness in killing spores; therefore, physical removal of spores by handwashing is required.

Handwashing with soap and running water must be done when hands are **visibly soiled**.

It is important that skin on hands remain intact to reduce the spread of organisms.

To clean hands properly:

1. Remove rings (other jewellery should not be worn at work)

2. Make sure that sleeves are pushed up and do not get wet
3. Rub all parts of the hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap Rub hands for a minimum of 15 seconds
4. Pay special attention to fingertips, between fingers, backs of hands and base of the thumbs
5. If using soap, rinse hands with warm, running water
6. Dry hands thoroughly

Reminders:

- Do not wear artificial nails
- Keep nails short and clean
- Remove chipped nail polish
- Apply lotion to hands frequently

[How to hand rub and handwash](#)

Policy: [IC 10 Hand Hygiene](#), [IC 11 Gloves](#), [Use of](#)

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