
Hand Hygiene Procedure

Content Applies To

- Mayo Clinic Health System in Fairmont and all affiliated clinics (See last page for clinic list)
- Mayo Clinic Health System in Mankato and all affiliated clinics (See last page for clinic list)
- Mayo Clinic Health System in New Prague and all affiliated clinics (See last page for clinic list)
- Mayo Clinic Health System in Springfield and all affiliated clinics (See last page for clinic list)
- Mayo Clinic Health System in St. James and all affiliated clinics (See last page for clinic list)
- Mayo Clinic Health System in Waseca and all affiliated clinics (See last page for clinic list)

Scope

All employees in healthcare setting

Purpose

- To educate staff in the proper methods of hand hygiene and fingernail hygiene
- To reduce the transmission of pathogenic microorganisms and the incidence of healthcare associated infections caused by these organisms
- To guide compliance and to inform healthcare personnel of the fingernail recommendations and hand hygiene included in the Center for Disease Control (CDC) Guidelines for Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings

Procedure

Indications for Hand Hygiene

Use waterless hand rub or soap and water to clean your hands:

- Before having direct contact with patients
- Before preparing or administering medication
- Before donning gloves (non-sterile or sterile) and after removing gloves
- Before inserting indwelling catheters or other invasive devices
- After contact with a patient's intact skin
- After contact with a patient's non-intact skin, wound dressings, secretions, excretions, mucous membranes, as long as hands are not visibly soiled
- When moving from a contaminated body site to a clean body site during patient care
- After contact with inanimate objects in the immediate vicinity of the patient

Use soap and water only to clean your hands:

- When hands are visibly soiled
- Before eating
- After using the restroom
- When notified from Infection Prevention & Control, during a outbreak situation

- As an alternative to the use of the waterless hand rub
- After contact with chemicals

Hand Hygiene Technique with Waterless Alcohol Based Formulation:

Duration of entire technique: 20 – 30 seconds

1. Apply an adequate amount (*enough product to wet all surfaces of hands or automatically dispensed amount from dispenser*) of product in cupped hand
2. Rub hands together to cover all surfaces of hands, including fingernails, wrists, and in-between fingers
3. Continue to rub your hands together until hands are completely dry (*at least 15 seconds*)
4. Do not touch items or surfaces until your hands are dry.
5. If you are allowed to wear jewelry in your work area and you choose to do so, do not remove your jewelry when using the waterless hand sanitizer.

Hand Hygiene Technique with Soap and Water:

1. If you are allowed to wear jewelry in your work area and you choose to do so, do not remove your jewelry when washing your hands.
2. Wet hands under warm running water; avoid very hot water to decrease risk of dermatitis
3. Apply 3 – 5 mL (about quarter-sized amount) of soap to your hands
4. Rub hands together for at least 15 seconds using friction on all surfaces of your hands, focusing on your fingertips and fingernails
5. Rinse hands well with warm water holding your fingers down to allow the water to drain off your fingertips
6. Dry your hands thoroughly and gently with disposable paper towel
7. Use the disposable paper towel to turn off the faucet if it is a hand-operated faucet
8. Discard paper towel into waste container
9. Apply hand lotion or cream as needed

Fingernails and Artificial Nails

- Cut fingernails a length of less than ¼” long.
- Restrict artificial nails for employees who have direct contact with patients or with certain products intended for patient use. This applies to those employees who have, but is not limited to:
 - ⇒ Direct physical contact with patients during exams, procedures, treatments, nursing cares, surgery or emergencies
 - ⇒ No patient contact but prepare equipment for patient use, medications or blood products for patient use, and food and beverages and serve food.

Definitions

Artificial Nails: Anything applied to natural nails other than polish. This includes, but is not limited to artificial nails, tips, wraps, appliqués, acrylics, gels, shellac and other items applied to the nail surface.

Hand Hygiene: A simple and effective method of preventing the spread of pathogenic organisms via the hands. Hand hygiene applies to hand washing, antiseptic hand wash, antiseptic hand rub or surgical hand antiseptis.

Healthcare-Associated Infection (HAI): An infection occurring in a patient in a hospital or other healthcare facility in whom it was not present or incubating at the time of admission, or the residual of an infection acquired during a previous admission. This includes infections acquired in the hospital but appearing after discharge, and also such infections among the staff of the facility.

Resident Skin Flora: Organisms that permanently colonize the superficial and deep structures of the skin. Many of these organisms are not highly pathogenic, but may cause infection in immunosuppressed patients, patients with invasive devices, or patients undergoing invasive procedures.

Transient Skin Flora: Organisms that colonize the skin for short periods, usually as a result of contact with a colonized person. These organisms may be highly pathogenic and are a frequent cause of healthcare associated infections.

Visibly Soiled Hands: Hands showing visible contamination with dirt or organic material, such as blood or other body fluids, secretions or excretions

References

[Guideline for Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings](#)

Center for Disease Control and Prevention Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. October 25, 2002. Vol. 51

[2009 WHO Guideline on Hand Hygiene in Health Care, Advanced Draft](#)