



Client & Family Safety Information

Infection Prevention & Control

How do viruses spread?

Cold and flu viruses are transmitted from person to person. Coughs and sneezes release viruses into the air where they can be breathed in directly by others. Viruses can also rest on hard surfaces like counters and doorknobs where they can be picked up and transmitted when a person touches their mouth or nose. In addition, eating, drinking, and smoking can spread viruses as germs are also transmitted via contaminated surfaces from unwashed hands.

How can I help prevent the transmission of the flu or other infections?

Everyone should take these steps to help stop the flu and other infections:

- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub (hand sanitizer)
- Sneeze or cough into your sleeve or arm - not your hands!
- Don't share objects that might transmit infections such as toothbrushes, dishes or cutlery, or water bottles
- Keep kitchen counters and surfaces clean
- Keep well rested, be physically active, drink plenty of fluids and eat nutritious food

Washing your hands is the single best way of preventing the spread of the flu and other infections.

When should you wash your hands?

- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose
- After using the bathroom
- After shaking hands
- before and after eating and/or preparing food
- After coming into contact with someone who is sick
- Before and after sharing equipment such as computers or musical instruments

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The recommended procedure for hand washing is as follows:

- Wet your hands with warm water up to the wrists
- Apply the soap - liquid soap is preferable to bar soap
- Work the soap under fingernails and all around the joints and fingers for a minimum of 20 seconds or sing "Happy Birthday!"
- Fully rinse off and lather under running water
- Pat your hands dry with a clean cloth or paper towel, taking care to dry them thoroughly between the fingers
- Turn off the tap/spout with a paper towel or cloth

Hand sanitizers are useful when you are not able to wash your hands with soap and water, such as when you are visiting a hospital or riding on public transit. A hand sanitizer containing at least 70% alcohol should be used.

The recommended procedure for using hand sanitizer is:

- Place enough alcohol-based hand rub into the palm of one hand, sufficient to wet both hands completely
- Rub liquid into the palms, between fingers, and under nails

Although hand sanitizers are convenient, they are not meant to replace washing your hands with soap and water.

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