



A guide to preventing illness from germs:

HANDWASHING IN THE WORKPLACE

CLEAN HANDS STOP GERMS





PEOPLE WHO WASH THEIR HANDS MORE, GET SICK LESS!

Preventing workplace illness is everyone's job

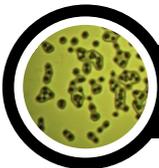


Did you know...

- Even if your hands look clean, they can still carry germs. Germs can be transferred onto hands through coughing, sneezing, shaking hands or touching common surfaces.

Washing or sanitizing your hands correctly is the most effective thing you can do to protect yourself from many infectious diseases.

- Handwashing helps to keep you health and helps to prevent the spread of infectious diseases to others.¹



CLEAN HANDS STOP GERMS



WASH YOUR HANDS

IT'S EASY TO BE A GERM SMART WORKPLACE

Create an environment that encourages clean hands for employees and guests.

Provide:

- ✓ plain liquid soap, paper towel and warm water in all washrooms.
- ✓ easy access to hand sanitizer with a minimum of 60% alcohol.²
- ✓ tissues to catch sneezes and coughs.
- ✓ regular cleaning of commonly touched surfaces such as lunch tables, door handles, desks and telephones.
- ✓ handwashing reminders, such as posters throughout the workplace.

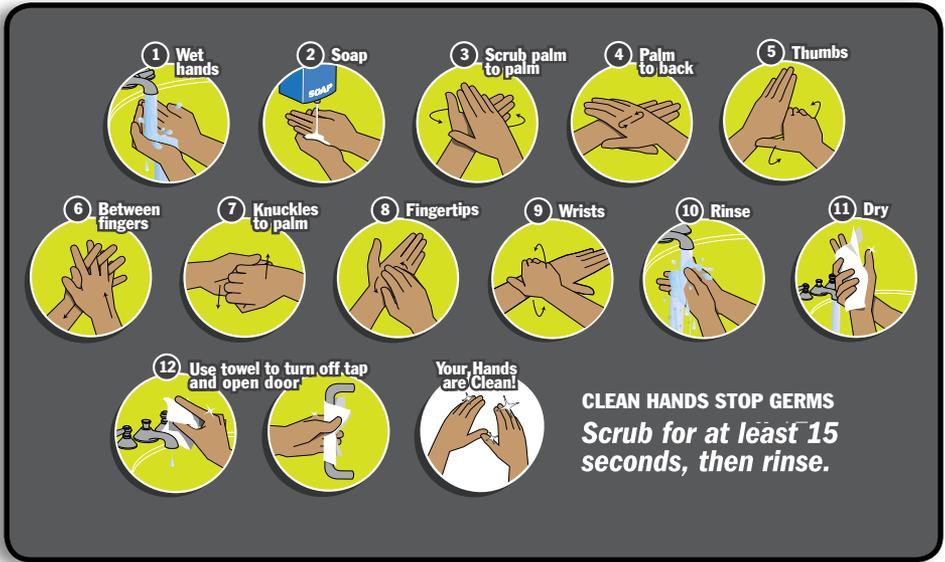
Encourage employees to learn about proper handwashing and hand sanitizer use. How-to videos and self-directed questionnaire are available online at www.germsmart.ca

Remind staff about handwashing at orientation, through emails, newsletters or at staff meetings.



WASHING HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER

Using soap, scrubbing, rinsing and drying all work together to remove germs.



Visit www.germsmart.ca to view videos

demonstrating proper technique for handwashing with soap and water.



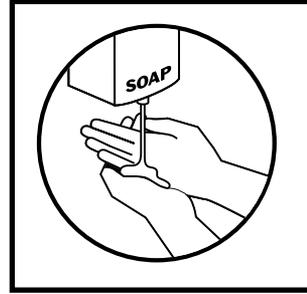
CLEAN HANDS STOP GERMS



WASH YOUR HANDS

Use plain liquid soap

- Choose plain soap that does not contain antibacterial products. Plain soap is just as effective in preventing illness.
- Avoid “topping up” dispensers when they are running low. Over time, germs can grow in the dispenser.
Wash and dry the dispenser before refilling.
- Avoid using bar soap in public places.
Germs can be spread when many people handle the same bar of soap.



Use paper towel

- Single use paper towels are recommended in public places. Shared towels spread germs from person to person.
- Paper towel should be used to turn taps off and to open the bathroom door. This avoids getting germs on hands after washing them.
- The rubbing action used during drying removes more germs.
- Moist hands promote germ growth, so dry hands well.
- Air dryers have been shown to blow germs around the room, and increase germs on hands.



USING HAND SANITIZER

Hand sanitizer is an effective way to kill germs when hands are not visibly dirty.



1 Apply hand sanitizer

2 Scrub palm to palm

3 Palm to back

4 Thumbs

5 Between fingers

6 Knuckles to palm

7 Fingertips

8 Wrists

Your hands are Clean!

CLEAN HANDS STOP GERMS
Scrub for at least 15 seconds.



Visit www.germsmart.ca to view videos

demonstrating proper technique using hand sanitizer.



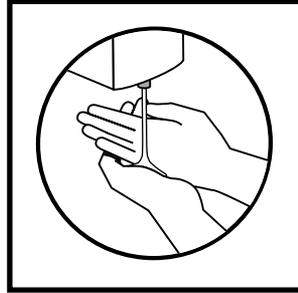
CLEAN HANDS STOP GERMS



WASH YOUR HANDS

Hand Sanitizers:

- can be used when washing with soap and water isn't possible.
- work by killing germs but do not remove them.
- should contain at least 60% alcohol as the active ingredient.²
- are not recommended after using the washroom and when doing food preparation. For this, handwashing with soap and water is required.
- do not work if your hands are dirty or greasy since germs hide underneath.
- should remain wet on your hands for at least 15 seconds to be effective.
- should be discarded when the bottle is empty or has passed the expiry date.
- are safe for children. Children should not put hands in their mouth until hands are dry (about 15 seconds) as it contains alcohol.
- should not be accessible to preschool children if unsupervised.
- are flammable, so should not be stored near a heat or electrical source.





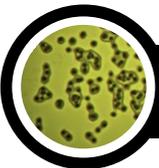
Wash hands several times per day, especially:

- ✓ After using the washroom.
- ✓ After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing into your hands.
- ✓ Before and after eating or preparing food.
- ✓ After handling shared objects such as keyboards, telephones, or till keys.
- ✓ After handling garbage and other waste.
- ✓ After handling animals or their waste.
- ✓ Before and after assisting people who are sick.
- ✓ Before and after attending to cuts, scrapes, burns or other breaks in skin.
- ✓ After contact with body fluids such as blood, sputum, vomit, urine or feces.
- ✓ Before and after smoking.
- ✓ When hands are visibly dirty.



THESE ARE COMMON TIMES WHEN HANDS CAN SPREAD GERMS THAT CAUSE ILLNESS.

CLEAN HANDS STOP GERMS



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WASH YOUR HANDS

OTHER GERM SMART STRATEGIES THAT PREVENT ILLNESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Keep your hands clean and away from your face

- Hands can pick up germs from common surfaces and from items you share with others.
- Germs can be spread when you touch your eyes, nose and mouth.

Practice respiratory etiquette

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or your sleeve when you sneeze or cough. This avoids spreading germs into the air or on to your hands and surfaces.
- Throw away tissues promptly and do not re-use them.
- Wash your hands after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing into your hands.

Stay home when you're sick

- Going to work with contagious respiratory (cold and flu) and gastrointestinal (vomiting and diarrhea) illness can spread germs to others.
- Staying home when you are sick keeps germs out of the workplace and protects co-workers, their families and your customers.



Keep your environment clean

- Choose appropriate products and use as directed on the label. The label will indicate if the product is a “cleaner” or a “disinfectant” or both. It will provide instructions to effectively clean, disinfect, or sanitize.
- Use cleaners to lift dirt, grease and germs, allowing them to be rinsed away. Use disinfectants to kill 99.99% of common germs. Use sanitizers to reduce the germ count to a safe level.
- Clean all commonly touched surfaces daily if possible.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces daily that may have blood, sputum, vomit, urine or feces on them, such as toilets, flush handles, stall door handles, taps, and sinks.
- Follow public health guidelines to clean and sanitize areas where food is prepared and served. These can be found at: www.saskhealthauthority.ca

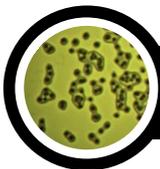
Consider developing policies that address Germ Smart Strategies

Policies could include: sick leave, handwashing, cleaning and handwashing training in your workplace. (Resources can be found at www.germsmart.ca)



Identify potential handwashing barriers

in your workplace with employees, and consider their solutions for improving handwashing practices.



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WASH YOUR HANDS



IS YOUR WORKPLACE GERM SMART?

Visit www.germsmart.ca

**for additional resources to support handwashing
in your workplace or to *contact us!***



1 Government of Canada & Public Health Agency of Canada. (2009). *The Benefits of Hand Washing*. Available at: www.canada.ca

2 Centre for Disease Control. (2020). *When and How to Use Hand Sanitizer*. Available at www.cdc.gov





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WASH YOUR HANDS**



For more information visit www.germsmart.ca