

Hand Hygiene – Advice for patients and their visitors Information Leaflet

Hand washing is the most important method of preventing and controlling infection.

Organisms (germs) live on our skin and do not cause any problems. The skin acts as a barrier, it is only when the skin is broken that germs can enter the body and may cause an infection.

Patients, staff and visitors can reduce the spread of infection by good hand hygiene.

Our staffs take hand hygiene seriously but sometimes they may forget to clean their hands as often as they should. So if you are worried that they have forgotten it is OK to remind them.

We welcome your help in keeping you safe.

When should I wash my hands with soap and water?

- Before eating
- Before preparing food for others or assisting them to eat. After using the toilet or bathroom
- After assisting someone else to use the toilet or bathroom. After coughing or sneezing
- When visibly dirty

When should I use alcohol gel?

- When entering and leaving the ward
- Alcohol gel can be used in place of soap and water in most circumstances. If hands look dirty it is best to use soap and water

How to Perform Good Hand Hygiene

Remove hand and wrist jewellery and roll your sleeves up this gives better access to perform this task.

Using soap:

1. Wet your hands first
2. Apply the soap – follow the technique in this leaflet or on the poster above all sinks
3. Dry hands thoroughly with individual paper towels
4. Dispose of paper towel in bin using foot pedal only

Using alcohol gel:

Apply gel from dispenser - follow the same technique. Allow the gel to evaporate in order for it to be effective.

Handwashing is the single most important measure for preventing the transmission of infection.

If you have concerns regarding infection or infection prevention please speak to the nurse looking after you. You can also discuss your concerns with a Matron or a member of the Infection Prevention & Control Team on 0151 702 4014.

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Palm to palm.



Right palm over top of left hand and left palm over top right hand.



Palm to palm fingers interlaced.



Backs of fingers to opposite palm with fingers interlocked.



Rotational rubbing of wrist and right thumb clasped in left palm and vice versa.



Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa.

Use this method for washing with soap & water or applying alcohol gel.

Visibly dirty hands must be washed with soap and water.

Trust Infection Control Information leaflets are available on the following topics:

General patient Information (IPC01)
Hand Hygiene- NICU, Guidance for Parents and Visitors (IPC03)
Helping care for your Wound (IPC04)

Health Protection Agency Leaflets:

MRSA
Clostridium Difficile
Noro virus

Please note that Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust is a smoke free site. Smoking is not allowed inside the hospital building or within the hospital grounds, car parks and gardens. Staff are available to give advice about stopping smoking, please ask about this.

This leaflet can be made available in difference formats on request. If you would like to make any suggestions or comments about the content of this leaflet, then please contact the Patient Experience Team on 0151 702 4353 or by email at pals@lwh.nhs.uk

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