



The Importance of Hand Washing



Overview

One of the best ways you can keep from getting sick is to wash your hands often. Proper hand washing keeps harmful germs you've touched from getting into your eyes, nose and mouth. And, it keeps you from spreading harmful germs to others.

How germs get on your hands

Germs get on your hands in many ways. They are found in human and animal waste. So when you go to the bathroom, change a diaper or pet an animal, you may touch them. Uncooked meats also carry harmful germs that can spread to kitchen sinks and countertops. And, germs travel through the air in tiny droplets when a sick person coughs and sneezes. These germs also land on surfaces that you may touch. Washing your hands properly helps protect you from all of these germs.

How to wash hands properly

So, how should you wash your hands? It's easy. First, wet your hands with clean, running water. Turn off the tap. Put soap on them and lather them together. Make sure you don't forget the backs of your hands, between your fingers and under your nails. Lather for at least 20 seconds. When you're done, rinse them well under clean, running water. And then dry them with a clean towel or by air drying.

Conclusion

That's all there is to it! The simple practice of washing your hands is the easiest way to lower everyone's risk of illness. So wash your hands often.

