Keeping Your Child Safe
Hand Hygiene at SickKids

Working together is the best way to keep your child safe.
Please read the important information below.

WASHING HANDS KEEPS YOU SAFE!
Germs are found everywhere. Certain germs can cause diseases and make you sick. Washing your hands is the best way to stop the spread of infections.

WHEN TO CLEAN YOUR HANDS
Before you:
• Eat food or feed a child.
• Give medications.
• Enter a hospital.
• Enter a patient’s room.

After you:
• Use a bathroom, change diapers or help your child in a bathroom.
• Touch blood or other body fluids, such as saliva or vomit.
• Sneeze, cough or blow your nose.
• Handle garbage.
• Leave a patient’s room.
• Leave a hospital.

SAFETY TIP: Put us to the test! Ask your health-care providers if their hands are clean before they care for your child.

TEACHING CHILDREN TO CLEAN THEIR HANDS
• Start early. Teach children to wash their hands when they are very young and make it a part of their routine.
• Provide supervision. Very young children should be supervised when being taught how to use sanitizer/soap when washing their hands.
• Lead by example. Always clean your hands either using hand sanitizer or soap and water.
• Make it easy. Make sure the sink, soap and towels are within your child’s reach. Liquid or foam soap may be easier for kids to use.
• Explain why. Tell your child that germs can be on their hands even if their hands look clean. Germs can make them sick, so it’s important to clean them off, especially before eating.
• Avoid scalds. Turn on the water and adjust the temperature for your child until they are old enough to do it on their own.
• Get backup. Find out if your child’s school or daycare centre makes hand hygiene and infection control a priority.

Adapted from www.aboutkidshealth.ca
**HOW TO CLEAN YOUR HANDS USING SOAP AND WATER**  
If your hands are soiled or dirty, you must wash your hands with soap and water.

1. Wet hands.  
2. Add squirt of soap.  
3. Rub hands for 15 seconds.  
4. Rinse.  
5. Pat dry with paper towel.  
6. Turn tap off using paper towel.

**SAFETY TIP:** Did you know that hand sanitizer does not clean peanut, tree nut, milk, egg, soy or wheat residue? If your child has an allergy be sure to wash your hands with soap and water if you think you may have come into contact with an allergen.

**HOW TO CLEAN YOUR HANDS USING ALCOHOL-BASED HAND RUB (HAND SANITIZER)**  
Unless you can see dirt on your hands, you can use a hand sanitizer to clean them.

1. Add squirt to dry hand.  
2. Rub palm to palm.  
3. Rub between fingers.  
4. Rub both thumbs.  
5. Rub back of each hand.  
6. Rub fingertips of each hand.  
7. Rub hands until dry.

**SPEAK UP AND ASK QUESTIONS. TALK TO YOUR HEALTH-CARE TEAM**

- You know your child best. Speak up if you feel something’s not right or you have concerns about your child’s care.  
- Give your health-care team an up-to-date description of your child’s health.  
- Tell us about any treatments or surgeries by any other health-care professionals, including naturopaths or herbalists.  
- Tell us about your child’s special physical, emotional or equipment needs or about any special aids like glasses or hearing aids.  
- Share unique things about your child with caregivers that may be important for your child’s overall care (e.g. if they dislike loud noises or bright lights).  
- Tell us if there are any changes in your child’s condition that concern you. You may notice things the health-care team doesn’t.