



## Handwashing

Washing of the hands is a “win-win” for everyone (except microorganisms). As soon as possible a child should learn how to wash their hands properly and learn why clean hands are important. Washings hands before and after many procedures can help remove potentially dangerous microorganisms and prevent the spread to others. This simple process should become a habit in daily living. If clean water and soap is unavailable, the use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used. Using common sense indicates there are many times that it is imperative to perform handwashing. Some of these can include, but are not limited to: before, during, after preparing food, before eating, when around someone who is ill and especially before and after treating them, handling garbage, after using the rest room, or when hands are visibly soiled.

Proper handwashing involves the 5 steps: wet, lather, scrub, rinse, and dry hands.

Naturally, handwashing is a basic task necessary in all health care professions. Handwashing is considered the most important method used for aseptic technique and prevention of the spread of infection. The hands are the most perfect natural resource for the spread of pathogens from one person to another. Meticulously washing the hands controls the spread of disease and keeps everyone safe!

The following is the recommended method for handwashing in a health care facility. In daily routines or anywhere other than a health care facility, this procedure might be adapted.

- Turn the faucet on with a clean paper towel. Adjust the temperature of the water. Warm water is typically used because it is less injurious to the hands than hot water and creates better suds than cold water.
- Remove jewelry and then wet your hands with the fingers pointing downward. This prevents water from getting on the forearms and then flowing back toward hands to contaminate them.
- Using soap, create a lather on the hands. Soap is used because of the surfactants (lipids and alkaline) contained in soap aid in raising dirt and microorganisms from the skin. Pathogens are trapped in the soap and then rinsed away. People tend to scrub hands more thoroughly when using soap, which further removes microorganisms.
- Work soap lather all over and through your hands, wrists, and fingers. Interlace fingers and wash. Put the bottom of the palm over the top of the other hand and add friction while washing. Friction is used because it helps eliminate the microorganisms from the skin. Fingers can be cleaned effectively if held by the opposite hand and twisted. Clean fingernails by rubbing in a circular manner against the palm of the other hands. This forces soap under the fingernails. Wash hands for at least fifteen to twenty seconds. This should be approximately the time it takes to sing “Happy Birthday” at a normal pace twice.
- Rinse hands with fingertips pointed downward.
- Use a paper towel to shut off the faucet, and then use another clean paper towel to dry the hands. Dry hands from fingertips to wrist. If the hands touch the surface of the sink, repeat this process to make sure contamination does not occur. Empty paper towels in the trash. Dry paper towels are used because wet paper towels serve as a medium for

microorganisms.

- Use a fresh paper towel to wipe off the area without getting your hands soiled.

There is short video on handwashing located on the E<sup>2</sup> website

<http://www.esquaredhomeschool.com> to see proper handwashing techniques.

Practice performing handwashing as many times as necessary using the check list provided. When ready for the practical portion of handwashing, your teacher will evaluate you. This skill is critical and it is mandatory that all steps on the handwashing checklist be performed correctly in order to pass this skill.



**Directions:** Practice measuring and recording handwashing based on the requirements below. When finished, your teacher will complete your final check.

Measure and Record	Possible Points	Practice #1	Practice #2	Measure and Record	Points Earned
<u>Preparation</u> - Supplies assembled	5				
<u>Cleanliness</u> - Turns faucet on with dry towel	6				
<u>Regulation</u> - Adjust faucet to suitable temperature	6				
<u>Cleanliness</u> - Washes hands with fingertips pointed downward	7				
<u>Launder</u> - Creates soapy lather	6				
<u>Wash</u> - Scrubs palms using friction and a circular motion for 10– 15 seconds	8				
<u>Scour</u> - Scrubs tops of hands with opposite palms	8				
<u>Connect</u> - Interlaces fingers to wash between the fingers	8				
<u>Fingernails</u> - Cleans nails in a variety of ways	7				
<u>Rinse</u> - Rinse with fingertips pointed down	8				
<u>Dry</u> - Dry thoroughly with a dry paper towel	7				
<u>Dispose</u> - Place towels in waste can	4				
<u>Return</u> - Turn off faucet with dry paper towel and leaves area neat and clean	10				
<u>Note</u> - Identify five times hands must be washed.	10				
<b>100</b>					

