



(SOP)

Medical Handwashing

Purpose:

To remove transient microorganisms and reduce resident flora from the hands, thereby preventing the spread of infection.

Equipment:

- Clean running water (preferably warm)
 - Antimicrobial or non-antimicrobial soap (liquid or bar)
 - Disposable paper towels or sterile towels
 - Elbow or foot-operated sink (if available)
 - Alcohol-based hand sanitizer (if soap and water are unavailable)
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Procedure:

Preparation:

1. **Remove all jewelry**, including rings and watches, as they can harbor microorganisms.
2. **Roll up sleeves** to avoid contamination.

Steps of Handwashing:

1. **Wet hands and wrists:**
 - Turn on the tap (preferably using an elbow or foot-operated mechanism if available).
 - Wet hands and wrists thoroughly under running water. Keep your hands lower than your elbows to allow water to run off toward your fingertips.
2. **Apply soap:**
 - Apply an adequate amount of liquid soap or use a soap bar.
 - Rub hands together to create a lather.
3. **Rub palms together:**
 - Rub your palms against each other with your fingers interlaced to clean the entire surface of both hands.
4. **Rub the back of hands:**
 - Place the right palm over the back of the left hand, interlace fingers, and rub thoroughly. Repeat with the left palm over the right hand.
5. **Interlace fingers:**
 - Rub hands together with interlaced fingers to clean the spaces between the fingers.

6. Clean the backs of fingers:

- With the fingers interlocked, rub the backs of the fingers on opposing palms, ensuring thorough cleaning of the knuckles and finger joints.

7. Clean the thumbs:

- Grasp the left thumb with the right hand and rub it in a rotational movement. Repeat for the right thumb using the left hand.

8. Clean the fingertips and nails:

- Rub the tips of the fingers against the opposite palm in a circular motion to clean the fingertips and under the nails.

9. Clean the wrists:

- Rotate the right hand around the left wrist and rub it thoroughly. Repeat with the left hand around the right wrist.

10. Rinse hands:

- Rinse hands and wrists under clean, running water, keeping hands lower than the elbows to allow water to run off properly.

11. Dry hands:

- Dry hands thoroughly with a disposable paper towel or a sterile towel. Use a new paper towel for each hand if possible.

12. Turn off the tap:

- Use a paper towel to turn off the tap to prevent recontamination from the faucet.

13. Dispose of the paper towel in the appropriate waste bin.

Duration:

The entire process should take **40-60 seconds** to ensure thorough cleaning.