

# HAND HYGIENE in HEALTHCARE SETTINGS

Hand washing is only one component of Hand Hygiene.

Hand Hygiene includes:

- Hand washing
- Hand Antisepsis
- Hydration

## Hand Washing

- It's more than common sense. According to the U.S. Center for Disease Control, "Hand washing is the single most important procedure for preventing the spread of infection."
- Hand washing protects patients AND employees from infection.
- Hand washing is the removal of soil and transient bacteria from your skin.
- Plain liquid or foam soap and water is recommended for routine hand washing.

## Hand Antisepsis

- Hand Antisepsis is required when performing invasive procedures or caring for severely immunocompromised patients.
- Hand Antisepsis requires the use of an antimicrobial soap or alcohol hand rub.

## Hydration

- The skin is the body's largest organ and helps regulate our temperature, protects us from heat and cold, and insulates us from invasion by dirt, bacteria, and infection.
- To adequately protect us, the skin must be kept healthy and intact and protected from the damage from frequent hand washing, chemical exposure, and glove use.'
- 5 – A – Day Rule. Apply hospital approved lotion after hand washing and frequently (recommend 5 times a day) throughout the day.
- Contact employee health if you experience skin conditions, or for soap and lotion alternatives.

### Hand washing with Liquid or Foam Soap

- Wet hands
- Apply soap
- Rub hands together vigorously for 15 seconds
- Cover all surfaces of hands and fingers
- Rinse hands with warm water and dry thoroughly with a disposable towel
- Use towel to turn off faucet.

### Alcohol Hand Rubs

- Apply product to palm of one hand
- Use amount of product indicated on package instructions
- Rub both hands together
- Cover all surfaces of hands and fingers until hands are dry (usually 15-25 seconds)

### Other Aspects of Hand Hygiene

- Do not wear artificial fingernails or extenders when providing patient care.
- Keep natural nails less than ¼ inch long.
- Wear gloves when you anticipate contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials, mucous membranes and non-intact skin.
- Remove gloves after caring for a patient. Do not wear the same pair of gloves for the care of more than one patient.
- Change gloves during cares with the same patient if moving from a contaminated body site to a clean body site.