



Hand Hygiene Policy

POLICY:

Physicians, employees, students, contracted workers and volunteers engaged in direct patient contact shall adhere to the following guidelines regarding hand hygiene practices. These practices are consistent with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations.

PURPOSE:

To provide guidelines to promote hand hygiene practices and reduces transmission of pathogenic organisms to patients and staff.

PROCEDURE:

In addition to traditional handwashing with soap and water, the CDC is recommending the use of alcohol-based hand rubs. Proper hand-washing techniques minimize the spread of infection.

Follow these steps to properly wash your hands:

- a. Stand in front of, but away from the sink and turn on the water faucet to adequate flow.
- b. Wet your hands under the running water.
- c. Place an adequate amount of soap on your hands.
- d. Rub your hands together using a firm circular motion for at **least 15 seconds**. Note: Be sure to wash your whole hand, not just the palm of your hand.
- e. Rinse under running water, keeping your hands pointing downward.
- f. Dry your hands thoroughly with a paper towel.
- g. Turn off the faucet using the paper towel.
- h. Discard the paper towel in the waste basket.

The steps for using the hand sanitizer are as follows:

- a. Stand in front of the hand sanitizer dispenser and pull or push the pump handle to dispense the hand sanitizer.
- b. Dispense about a dime sized quantity of the hand sanitizer in hands.
- c. Rub hands together in a circular motion until hands are dry making sure to include the backs of hands and thumbs.

Indications for hand washing and hand antiseptics:

- a. Wash with soap and water when hands are visibly soiled.
- b. If hands are not visibly soiled, an alcohol-based rub may be used to decontaminate hands.

- c. If a patient is in isolation precautions for *Clostridium difficile*, use the surgical scrub contained in the isolation cart.

Decontaminate hands at the following times:

- a. **Upon entering the patient room.**
- b. **Upon exiting the patient room.**
- c. Upon reporting for work.
- d. Before gloving.
- e. After glove removal.
- f. Before and after each patient contact.
- g. After handling contaminated objects.
- h. Before handling medications.
- i. When leaving the facility.

Before eating and after using a restroom, wash hands with a non-antimicrobial soap and water or with an antimicrobial soap and water.

Fingernails:

- a. Fingernails should be clean, well cared for and no longer than ¼ inch from the fingertip in length.
- b. Artificial and long natural nails are not permitted in a clinical setting. The definition of artificial nails includes, but is not limited to acrylic nails, all overlays, tips, bonding, extensions, tapes, inlays or wraps. Polish is not permitted due to cracking.
- c. Nail jewelry is not permitted.

Hand lotion:

- a. The Infection Control Committee approves all soaps, alcohol hand rubs and lotion used at “Facility”.
- b. Only approved hand lotion may be used while on duty because they are chlorhexadine gluconate and latex compatible.

REFERENCES:

Association of Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) Text, 2014, Chapter 19

Saiman, L., Lerner, A., Saal, L., Todd, E., Fracaro, M., Schneider, N., et al. (2002). Banning artificial nails from health care settings. *American Journal of Infection Control*, June, 30(4), 252-254.

Toles, A. (2002). Artificial nails: Are they putting patients at risk? A review of the research. *Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing*, 19(5).

MMWR Guideline for Hand Hygiene in Health-Care Settings: *Recommendations of the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee and the HICPAC/SHEA/APIC/IDSA Hand Hygiene Task Force, October 25, 2002/Vol 51/No. RR-16.*