Canterbury District Health Board
Te Poari Hauora ō Waitaha

Hand Hygiene | What You Can Expect | Patient Information Leaflet

Hand Hygiene

What You Can Expect

Patient Information Leaflet

What to expect when you are receiving care

Hand hygiene is the single most important way to prevent the spread of harmful germs (bacteria and viruses) that can cause infection.

We expect our Healthcare workers to clean their hands:

- Before they touch you
- After they touch you
- Directly before and directly after they perform a procedure on you
- After they are exposed to body fluids
- Before and after wearing gloves
- After touching your surroundings (e.g. bed) if none of the above have occurred.
- After being in an isolation room.

It's OK to ask

Healthcare workers are trained and educated about correct hand hygiene. It is your right to expect healthcare workers to have clean hands before they care for you. The risk of infection being spread from a healthcare worker's hands to you is reduced when they perform correct hand hygiene.

Please feel free to remind your healthcare workers to clean their hands.

Keep 'em clean

What you and your visitors can do

When you are sick you are more at risk of developing an infection from harmful bacteria or viruses.

While in hospital (and when you return home) clean your hands:

- Before you touch, eat or prepare food
- After using the toilet
- After coughing and sneezing
- After touching animals
- After changing a nappy
- At any time a healthcare worker has advised you or your visitors to do so (e.g. caring for your own catheter).

Visitors can use the alcohol based hand rub (ABHR) and hand washing facilities when visiting you in hospital.

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There are two ways to clean your hands

Soap and water

If your hands look dirty or you have been to the toilet, please clean your hands with soap and water and dry them well for 10-20 seconds.

Alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR)

ABHR is very effective at killing most germs. Even if your hands look clean they may still carry germs that can be harmful. A squirt of ABHR rubbed all over the hands dries naturally in about 30 seconds when following the pictures below.

For more information on Hand Hygiene, visit: www.handhygiene.org.nz

One pump of ABHR or liquid soap to the palm of cupped hand

Rub palm to palm

Rub nails against palm of each hand

Go between the fingers

Fingertips

Backs of your hands

Thumbs

Wrists

Clean Hands Save Lives

For more information about:

- your health and medication, go to www.healthinfo.org.nz
- hospital and specialist services, go to www.cdhb.health.nz

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