

How often should you clean your hands?

We ask that all patients' parents' visitors and staff follow the advice below:

Patients-please clean your hands

- Before eating
- After using the toilet, bathroom or commode
- Before leaving your room and ward area.

Visitors- please clean your hands

- When you arrive on a ward and before visiting your child / relative / friend
- On entering and upon leaving rooms where a child is being nursed in isolation. Please check with the Nurse In Charge for additional precautions which may need to be taken in these circumstances.
- Before helping a patient with their meal
- Before visiting another patient.
- Before leaving your child/ relative / friends ward area.

Staff- should clean their hands

- Before and after direct contact with an individual patient, and between different procedures on an individual patient.
- Between contact with different patients
- Before entering and when leaving rooms where patients are nursed in isolation.
- Before/after removing gloves



It's OK to ask!

We take hand hygiene seriously but sometimes when we're really busy, we might not clean our hands as often as we should.

So if you're worried that we've forgotten, it's OK to remind us! We welcome your help in keeping you safe.

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Its Ok to Ask If I have
Cleaned my Hands

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Did you know that.....

- Germs are routinely picked up on hands when touching the environment for example door handles, telephones, taps and surrounds, when using the toilet, handling pets, uncooked foods etc
- Germs are easily transferred from the hand to surfaces and food.
- Some germs which are routinely picked up on hands can cause infections.

The good news is that these germs are easily removed by hand washing with soap and warm water or rubbing clean hands with an alcohol hand rub.



This is why we are asking patients and visitors to clean their hands before eating meals and after using the toilet.

If you cannot get to a sink or alcohol hand rub ask your nurse for a cloth with which to clean your hands.

Please encourage your visitors to wash their hands or to use the hand rub as they enter the ward or room to visit.

Remind hospital staff to clean their hands before they carry out any examination or procedure while tending to your child.

Is it really that important to clean your hands?

The answer is **YES**.

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland advises the public to wash their hands before preparing food, eating meals and after using the toilet in order to reduce the risk of food poisoning.

This also applies to hospitals. In hospitals it is even more important to wash hands as some patients are at particular risk of developing infections. This is why we ask for your and your visitors help in protecting you and other patients by practising good hand hygiene at all times.



What is the best way to clean your hands?

Hands can be cleaned by washing with plain soap and water or by applying a special formulated hand rub.

- Plain soap and water
Liquid soap and disposable paper towels are available at all sinks in the hospital and are good for both patients and staff to use.

This is a good choice if you are able to get to a sink.

Please tell the Nurse or Ward Attendant if there is no soap or disposable paper towels available at a sink and it will be replaced.

- Alcohol Hand Rubs
You will see staff putting a liquid on their hands and rubbing their hands together. This liquid is a hand disinfectant solution, which dries automatically.

It is fast and easy to use and is a good option for parents and patients also, if access to a sink is not convenient at the time hands need to be cleaned.