

5 MAY 2024



ACIPC
Australasian College
for Infection Prevention and Control

WORLD HAND HYGIENE DAY 2024

Let's share knowledge & stop the spread

WHY WASH HANDS?

- ✋ About 80% of infectious diseases are transmitted by unclean hands touching contaminated surfaces
- ✋ Organisms left on surfaces can survive for minutes, hours, days and even weeks depending on the organism, surface and environment
- ✋ Organisms multiply! A single bacterium can multiply into more than 16 million in 8 hours
- ✋ Hands come into contact with around 10 million organisms per day, and most people encounter roughly 60,000 organisms a day
- ✋ Humans are estimated to have approx. 1,500 bacteria living on each square centimetres of skin on their hands. Areas like under the fingernails and between the fingers often harbour more
- ✋ The average human touches their face 23 times an hour, risking infection transmission to eyes, nose and mouth
- ✋ Research has demonstrated that if everyone routinely washed their hands, a million deaths a year could be prevented
- ✋ The most common microbial contaminants from hands in health care include skin commensals and pathogens - MRSA, CDI, VRE, *E. coli*
- ✋ Unclean surfaces can harbour millions of organisms. Keyboards and related hardware have been found to have 24-100% proportion contamination. Portable medical equipment is a significant source of transmission, identifying at least 40 colonies on all items. Mobile phones are considered a hazardous microbial platform, housing bacteria, fungi, protists, viruses and bacteriophages.

HOW

- ✋ **WET** hands with running water
- ✋ **SOAP** your hands and lather up
- ✋ **RUB** all over your hands, between your fingers and thumbs for 20 seconds
- ✋ **RINSE** hands under running water
- ✋ **DRY** hands using paper towel

WHEN

Before:

- Entering or leaving a healthcare facility, clinic or personal environment (patient/resident/client room or home)
- Touching patient/resident/client
- Handling medicines
- Preparing/eating food
- Touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Preparing a bottle
- Donning gloves

After:

- Removing gloves
- Blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- Going to the toilet
- Touching animals and pets including therapy animals
- Changing a nappy
- Assisting another person with toileting/personal hygiene

