

PUBLIC HEALTH FACT SHEET



Department of Health & Human Services

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The most important thing you can do to prevent the spread of illness is to wash your hands and your children's hands thoroughly and often.

Handwashing

This is how you should wash your hands:

- Rub your hands together vigorously for at least 20 seconds using warm running water and soap. Make sure you have lots of bubbles.
- Wash under fingernails, between fingers, back of hands and wrists.
- Rinse your hands well under running water.

In public bathrooms:

- Dry your hands with a single-use paper towel (or hot air blow dryer).
- If your towel dispenser has a handle, be sure to roll the paper down before you wash your hands. This helps to insure that you will not pick up new germs from the handle.
- For hand-held faucets, turn off water using a paper towel instead of bare hands so you will not pick up new germs on your clean hands.
- Open the bathroom door with the same paper towel.
- In the home, change handwashing towels often.

These are times when you should wash your hands:

- After you use the bathroom or help a child use the bathroom.
- After you change a diaper.
- After you handle items soiled with body fluids or wastes such as blood, drool, urine, stool or discharge from nose or eyes.
- After you clean up messes.
- After you handle a sick child.
- Before you prepare or serve food.
- Before you eat or drink.

Teach and show children how to wash hands correctly. They should wash when:

- they arrive home from day care, a friend's home, an outing or school.
- they use the toilet or have their diapers changed.
- they have touched a child who may be sick or have handled soiled items.
- they eat or drink.

OVER



HAND WASHING INSTRUCTIONS:

- use soap and running water
- rub your hands vigorously for 20 seconds
- wash all surfaces, including:
 - backs of hands
 - wrists
 - between fingers
 - under fingernails
- rinse well
- dry hands with a paper towel
- turn off the water using a paper towel instead of bare hands

For more information on Handwashing, call (248) 858-1406 or toll free 1 (800) 848-5533.

For additional copies, visit our website at www.oakgov.com/health.