

N-130 R Hand Washing

Purpose

Prevent the spread of infection by contaminated hands.

Remove soil and transient organisms from the hands and to reduce total microbial counts over time.

Applies To

Registered Nurses

Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurses

Other (*Identify*): _____

Equipment/Supplies

- Soap.
- Paper towels.
- Water.

Special Considerations

The need for hand washing depends on the type, intensity, duration, and sequence of activities. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends routinely washing hands in the following situations:

Before contact with clients who are susceptible to infection (such as newborns or immunosuppressed clients.)

After caring for a client.

Before touching organic material.

Before performing invasive procedures such as catheterization and suctioning.

Before and after handling dressings or touching open wounds.

After handling contaminated equipment.

Between contact with different clients.

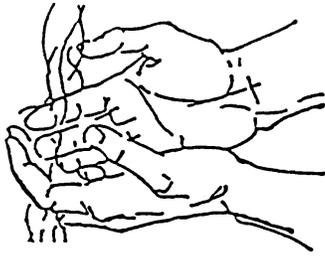
The CDC and Public Health Service note that washing times of at least 10 to 15 seconds will remove most transient microorganisms from the skin. If hands are visibly soiled, more time may be needed.

The frequency of washing also affects the type and number of bacteria on the hands. One study found that nurses who washed their hands eight times a day were less likely to carry gram-negative bacteria on their hands.

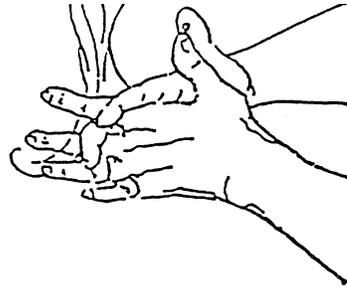
Procedure

1. Use an easy-to-reach sink with warm, running water, soap or disinfectant, and paper towels.

2. Push wristwatch and sleeves above your wrists. If wearing rings, remove during washing.
3. Keep fingernails short and filed.
4. Inspect surface of hands and fingers for breaks or cuts in skin and cuticle.
5. Stand in front of sink, keeping hands and clothing away from sink surface.
6. Turn on water faucet by covering it with paper towel.
7. Avoid splashing water against clothing.
8. Regulate flow of water so that temperature is warm.
9. Wet hands and lower arms thoroughly under running water. Keep hands and forearms lower than elbows during washing.
10. Apply soap to hand, lathering thoroughly.
11. Wash hands, using plenty of lather and friction for at least 15 seconds. Interlace fingers and rub palms and back of hands with circular motion at least five times each.
12. If areas underlying fingernails are soiled, clean them with fingernails of other hand and additional soap or clean orangewood stick. Avoid tearing or cutting skin under or around nail.
13. Rinse hands and wrists thoroughly, keeping hands down and elbows up.
14. Dry hands thoroughly from fingers to wrists and forearms.
15. Discard paper towel in waste receptacle.
16. Turn off water faucet using a clean, dry paper towel.



START WITH WARM WATER



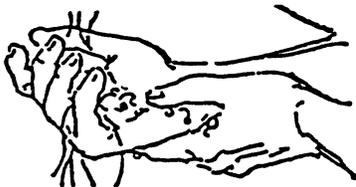
RINSE THOROUGHLY



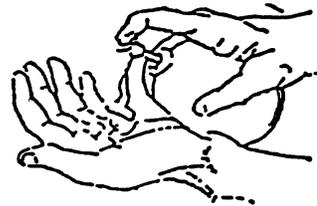
USE LIQUID OR BAR SOAP



DRY WITH CLEAN PAPER TOWEL



SCRUB FOR AT LEAST 30 SECONDS



USE LOTION IF DESIRED

Related Procedures

None.

Policy History

Approval Date	11/1/2009
Approved By	Anne Tyson, Herman Pippin, Sandra Hill
Revision Date	12/31/2009
Approved by	Anne Tyson, Herman Pippin, Sandra Hill
Revision Date	8/15/2011 Lynne Carpenter, Herman Pippin, Mike Carpenter
Approved by	
Revision Date	
Approved by	