

Handwashing Information Sheet

Handwashing

Washing your hands is easy, and it's one of the most effective ways to remove dirt and spread viruses, bacteria and germs between people and objects.

Follow these five steps every time you wash your hands:

- **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), and apply soap.
- **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- **Wash** your hands for at least 20 seconds.
- **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
- **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.
- Where non hand operable taps are not available, use paper towel to turn off taps then dispose

Hand Sanitiser

In most situations, washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs, etc. If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol. Due to the high levels of alcohol in it, hand sanitiser is a highly flammable substance and should be used and stored correctly. When used and stored (as guidance on the bottle), hand sanitiser is quite safe, however improper use poses safety risks for both children and adults.

You must ensure your hands are fully dried before you carry out any activities or touch anything. Extended use of hand sanitisers can cause your hands to become dry. Try to moisturise hands when you get home to prevent skin from drying out.

Important point to remember about Hand Sanitisers:

- They do **not** get rid of all types of germs.
- They may not be as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy, use on clean hands whenever possible
- They might not remove harmful chemicals from hands
- They should **not** be ingested, as it could lead to poisoning
- Hand sanitiser vapors are **flammable**
- **Do not** eat, drink or smoke after using them.

Hand washing best practice can be found here:

<http://www.nipcm.hps.scot.nhs.uk/appendices/appendix-1-best-practice-how-to-hand-wash/>