

Hand Hygiene at UHN

Information for patients, families and visitors

Read this pamphlet to learn about:

- What you can do to stop the spread of germs
- What UHN is doing to protect you
- Where to find more information



What is hand hygiene?

Hand hygiene (or hand washing) removes dirt and kills germs that may be on your hands.

At the hospital this can be done in 2 ways:

1. Using soap and water
2. Using an alcohol-based hand rub (hand sanitizer)

Why is hand washing important?

Washing our hands is one of the easiest and best ways of staying healthy.

Throughout the day, your health care team touches patients and equipment that could have harmful germs. These germs can then move from patient to patient on the hands of the health care provider. **Good hand hygiene stops the spread of germs.**

UHN is committed to your safety. This means we are making sure that all our health care providers are washing their hands the right way and at the right times to help keep you safe.

The 4 best times when health care providers should wash their hands are:

1. Before entering a patient's room and caring for the patient
2. Before doing any test or procedure
3. After having contact with any body fluids
4. After caring for a patient and when leaving the patient's room

I'm just visiting. Why do I need to clean my hands?

Help keep all patients safe. Washing your hands is one of the easiest ways to stop the spread of germs while you are at the hospital.

Remember to clean your hands:

- When you arrive at the hospital
- Before and after leaving a patient's room
- After using the washroom
- Just before leaving the hospital

What can I use to clean my hands?

Any patient or visitor can use the alcohol based hand rub found throughout the hospital.

You can also wash your hands with soap and water.

What is UHN doing to make sure everyone is cleaning their hands?

UHN checks how often and how well our health care providers are washing their hands or using alcohol based hand rub.

At UHN we also:

- Post the results on our units of how well we are cleaning our hands
- Teach hospital staff, patients and visitors why hand washing is so important
- Review hand hygiene rates with each patient care unit
- Make sure that hand hygiene products are easily available for health care providers and patients in all patient care areas
- Work with all our health care providers to improve hand washing practices

Who can I talk to if I have more questions?

If you have questions or concerns about stopping infections:

- Ask your nurse to call Infection Prevention and Control
- Email us at InfectionControlUHN@uhn.ca

Visit www.uhnpatienteducation.ca for more health information.

Contact us to provide feedback or request this brochure in a different format, such as large print or electronic formats: pfep@uhn.ca

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Form: D-5696 | Author: Infection Prevention and Control | Revised: 09/2019