

SUBJECT: HAND HYGIENE	POLICY #11017
SECTION: INFECTION CONTROL	PAGE: 1 OF: 3

PURPOSE:

- To provide guidelines for effective hand hygiene, in order to prevent the transmission of bacteria, germ and infections.

POLICY:

- All personnel will use the hand-hygiene techniques, as set forth in the following procedure. The CDC has recommended guidelines when to use non-antimicrobial soap and water, an antimicrobial soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand rub. When hands are visibly dirty, contaminated with proteinaceous (protein) material, visibly soiled with blood or body fluids and after using the toilet, wash hands with either non-antimicrobial soap and water or an antimicrobial soap and water. When hands are not visibly soiled, staff may use an alcohol-based hand rub (according to the manufacturer's guidelines). If an alcohol-based hand rub is not available, wash hands with soap and water. Hand hygiene should be performed:
  - Before coming on duty
  - When hands are soiled
  - Before each patient encounter
  - Before applying sterile gloves and inserting a central intravascular catheter
  - Before applying gloves and inserting indwelling catheters, peripheral vascular catheters, other invasive devices that do not require a surgical procedure
  - After coming in contact with patient's intact skin, i.e., taking a patient's blood pressure, pulse, lifting/moving the patient
  - After working on a contaminated body site and then moving to a clean body site on the same patient
  - After coming in contact with bodily fluids, dressings, mucous membranes, etc., and hands are not visibly soiled (i.e., handling sputum containers, bedpans, urinals, catheters)
  - After exposure to Bacillus anthracis (Anthrax) is known or suspected, wash hands with non-antimicrobial soap and water or with antimicrobial soap and water. The action of washing and rinsing hands under these circumstances is recommended because alcohols, chlorhexidine, iodophors and other antiseptic agents have poor activity against spores
  - When providing care to a patient with C. difficile infection (proven or suspected based on institution acquired or antibiotic associated diarrhea) or their belongings/surroundings, WellsBrooke Certified Home Health

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Care, Inc. staff must thoroughly wash their hands with bactericidal soap before and after the contact. If known C. difficile infection, the use of disposable gloves and gown is required. The used gown and gloves must be disposed appropriately.

- After contact with medical equipment/supplies in patient areas
- Always after removing gloves
- Leaving an isolation area
- After toileting, wash hands with non-antimicrobial soap and water or antimicrobial soap and water.
- After smoking
- After blowing or wiping the nose
- Before and after eating, wash hands with non-antimicrobial soap and water or antimicrobial soap and water

#### PROCEDURE:

- Using antimicrobial soap and water or non-antimicrobial soap and water:
  - Keep clothing away from sink and splashes.
  - Wear minimal jewelry.
  - Keep nails short (1/4 inch in length). No artificial nails or extenders.
  - Turn on water and adjust temperature for your comfort.
  - Wet hands and apply manufacturer's recommended amount of soap to hands. Lather well (soap reduces surface tension enabling the removal of bacteria).
  - Clean fingernail area (bacteria may be harbored beneath fingernails).
  - Wash hands thoroughly, using rigorous scrubbing action for at least 15 seconds. Work lather around fingernails, top of hands, etc. (to facilitate eradication of all bacteria).
  - Rinse hands and wrists under running water.
  - Repeat hand-hygiene technique, if necessary (to prevent recontamination of hands).
  - Dry hands with clean paper towel.
  - Turn off faucets with paper towel and discard.
  - Avoid using hot water for hand-hygiene. Repeated use of hot water may increase the healthcare worker's risk of dermatitis.
  
- Using an alcohol-based hand rub:
  - Apply the manufacturer's recommended amount of alcohol-based hand rub to palm of one hand.
  - Rub hands together, covering all areas of the hands and fingers, until hands are dry.

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NOTES:

- Always follow Standard Precautions. Remember, when hands are visibly soiled, wash hands with either a non-antimicrobial soap and water or an antimicrobial soap and water.
- Gloves are to be worn when contact with blood, bodily fluids, mucous membranes, dressing, non-intact skin, etc., is anticipated.
- Change gloves and discard after each patient contact. One pair of gloves – one patient.
- Change gloves when moving from a contaminated body site to a client body site on the same patient.