

Alcohol-based hand rub facts:

- Kills most bacteria, fungi and some viruses
- Hand rubs containing at least 70% alcohol **kill 99.9%** of all bacteria found on our hands **within 15 seconds**

Advantages of alcohol-based hand rubs:

- Takes less time than washing with soap and water
- More readily available than sinks thus making it more accessible to all
- Cause less irritation and dryness than hand washing
- More effective in reducing the number of bacteria on hands
- Has led to improved hand hygiene practices both within healthcare facilities and the community

Other ways to prevent the spread of infection:

- Do not visit the facility if you are ill, or have an infectious disease that could be spread to others/patients
- **Do not sit** on patients' or residents' beds
- **Discard** all used tissues immediately into a **garbage container**

Infection Prevention & Control - created March 2011

Hand Hygiene

Information for Patients & Visitors



Hand Hygiene - Information for Patients & Visitors

What is hand hygiene?

Hand hygiene refers to the **removing or killing of microorganisms (germs) on the hands**. When performed correctly, hand hygiene is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of communicable disease and infections. **Hand hygiene can be performed using soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub.**

When to practice hand hygiene

- On arrival and before leaving the healthcare facility
- Before and after contact with a patient/resident
- Before and after preparing and eating food
- Before and after touching your eyes or face
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After using the washroom
- After handling garbage, diapers or cleaning up children who have used washroom facilities
- Before and after treating a cut or wound

- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- When hands are visibly dirty

How to wash hands correctly with soap and water

- **Wet** hands with warm water
- **Apply** soap
- **Lather** hands well for 15 seconds
- Rub soap well between fingers, fingertips, thumbs, wrists, and back of hands
- **Rinse** thoroughly under water and dry hands by using paper towel
- Turn taps off with a paper towel



How to hand rub correctly with alcohol-based hand rub

- Apply product to palm of one hand
- **Rub** hands together for at least 15 seconds
- **Rub** product over all surfaces of hands and fingers until hands are dry



Hand sanitizer/alcohol-based hand rub dispensers are located throughout the Health Centre.