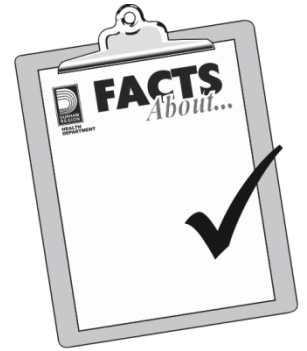




# FACTS *About...*



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

## Handwashing

### Why is handwashing so important?

Handwashing is the simplest and MOST important thing that you can do to stay healthy and not spread germs to others. Washing your hands with liquid soap and warm water will loosen dirt, oils, and germs off your skin.

### What happens if you do not wash hands frequently?

Handwashing removes germs you picked up from other people, dirty surfaces, or from animals. If dirty hands are not washed properly, these germs can make you sick or cause an infection when you touch your eyes, nose, mouth or open sores. Your dirty hands can also spread germs to other people or to the surfaces that you touch.

### When should you wash your hands?

Germs are too small to be seen with the naked eye. So, frequent and proper handwashing is strongly recommended:

- After using the washroom, changing a baby's diaper or helping someone with toileting
- After contact with blood or body fluids, sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose
- After handling garbage, animals or animal waste
- After removing single-use gloves (gloves are not a substitute for handwashing)
- When you get home from being away or outside
- Before, during and after food handling or preparation
- Before eating or feeding someone
- Before and after touching eyes, nose or mouth
- Before and after providing first aid, direct care or personal service to someone
- More frequently when someone in your home is sick
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty or feel dirty

Note: Alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 70-90% alcohol can be used when water and soap are not available and when your hands are not visibly dirty.

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For more information

Durham Region Health Department

905-668-2020 1-800-841-2729 durham.ca

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.



## What is the correct way to wash your hands?

1. Wet hands with warm running water.
2. Apply soap.
3. Rub hands together and scrub all surfaces of the hands for at least 20 seconds to loosen dirt and germs. Don't forget finger tips, between fingers, back of hands, and base of thumbs.
4. Rinse hands under water using a rubbing action to remove everything.
5. Dry hands with a clean towel, paper towel or an air dryer.
6. Taps should be turned off using the towel, if available.

**Wash your hands properly and frequently!**  
**Handwashing poster available upon request**  
8 1/2" x 11" and 5 1/2" x 8 1/2" posters available



## More information can be obtained from

Durham Region Health Department, Durham Health Connection Line  
905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729

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