

# Hand Hygiene

Information for patients & visitors

May 2024

Hand hygiene is the single most important thing you can do to help prevent the spread of infection.

Hand hygiene is a general term referring to the use of soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub to clean your hands.

## When should you clean your hands?

It is important to perform hand hygiene as you enter and leave a healthcare facility or hospital and:

- After going to the toilet
- After blowing your nose/sneezing
- After smoking
- After handling/patting animals
- Before, during & after preparing food
- When hands are visibly dirty

Hand wash basins are located throughout AHCL facilities and patient care areas.

## The best way to wash your hands using soap and water:

- Remove excess jewellery
- Wet hands with water
- Apply soap
- Rub all over and make a lather
- Rinse off with water
- Pat hands dry with paper towel
- Dispose of paper towel in bin

## Using alcohol-based hand rub

- Remove excess jewellery
- Squirt pump once into your cupped hands
- Rub hands together until dry
- Alcohol-based hand rub is available throughout all patient care areas and public areas of AHCL facilities

## Visitors should perform hand hygiene:

- On entering the ward before visiting your friend or relative
- Before helping a patient with their meal
- After using the bathroom/toilet
- After helping patients use the toilet/bathroom or commode
- On leaving the ward after visiting your friend or relative

## Thank you!

Practicing good hand hygiene both in hospital and other healthcare facilities can protect patients, relatives, and staff from infection. Encourage your visitors/carers to wash their hands or use the alcohol-based hand rub provided.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Our Infection Prevention and Control team on (02) 9480 9433 or (02) 9480 9732.

Or visit the following websites:



[National Hand Hygiene Initiative \(NHHI\)](#)



[World Health Organisation \(WHO\) – Hand Hygiene](#)