

Washing your hands

Hand washing is important:

- ◆ If hands are not clean they can spread germs.
- ◆ **You should wash your hands thoroughly and often** with soap and warm water and **especially**:
 - * When hands look dirty
 - * Before and after preparing, serving or eating food
 - * Before and after dealing with sick people
 - * Before and after changing the baby's nappy
 - * Before and after treating a cut or a wound
 - * After handling raw meat
 - * After going to the toilet or bringing someone to the toilet
 - * After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
 - * After handling rubbish or bins
 - * After handling an animal or animal litter/droppings
 - * After contact with flood water
- ◆ A quick rinse will not work – your hands will still have germs. To wash hands properly:
 - ~ Rub all parts of the hands and wrists with soap and water for **at least** 15 seconds (or as long as it takes to sing the *“Happy Birthday to you”* song two times!)
 - ~ Don't miss out on washing your finger tips, between your fingers, the back of your hands and the bottom of your thumbs – the pictures here will help.

Getting ready to wash your hands:

1



- ◆ Remove hand & wrist jewellery - rings, watch, bracelets

2



- ◆ Wet hands thoroughly under warm running water

3



- ◆ Apply a squirt of liquid soap to cupped hand

Washing your hands - take at least 15 seconds/the time it takes to sing the “Happy birthday to you” song twice!

4



- ◆ Rub palm to palm 5 times making a lather/suds

5



- ◆ Rub your right palm over the back of your left hand and up to your wrist 5 times
- ◆ Repeat on the other hand

6



- ◆ With right hand over the back of left hand, rub fingers 5 times
- ◆ Repeat on the other hand

7



- ◆ Rub palm to palm with fingers interlaced

8



- ◆ Wash both thumbs using rotating movement

9



- ◆ Wash nail beds—rub the tips of your fingers against the opposite palm

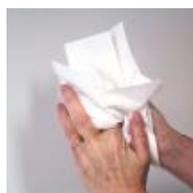
Rinsing and drying your hands:

10



- ◆ Rinse hands well making sure all the soap is gone

11



- ◆ Dry hands fully using a clean hand towel or a fresh paper towel
- ◆ Bin paper towel after use

**Remember -
Clean hands save lives &
stop the spread of many infections**

HSE Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

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