

For your good health

Hand hygiene (washing)

Keeping hands clean is the best way to stop germs from spreading. Germs can be spread by hand contact. Even though hands, objects or surfaces look clean, thousands of germs may remain. It is possible to bring germs into the hospital or take them home with you. Some germs can live on surfaces for hours or even days. Most germs are harmless, but some cause illness or make an illness worse.

What can you do?

To help prevent infection, we ask that everyone entering the unit perform a three-minute hand and forearm scrub before going to a baby's bedside. Please wash your hands or use the alcohol disinfectant any time before or after you touch your baby. You will see our staff doing this, too.

How should you clean your hands?

There are two ways to clean your hands:

Hand sanitizer

- All patient rooms have hand sanitizer dispensers immediately outside or inside the room.
- Foam sanitizer only needs to be the amount of the size of a quarter to clean hands well.
- Rub into all areas of the hands and fingers and especially around jewelry to clean thoroughly.

Washing your hands

- Wet your hands with warm water (too hot or too cold may cause chapping).
- Apply a small amount of soap.
- Rub hands together vigorously to lather and scrub all surfaces for at least 20 seconds (sing Happy Birthday twice!).
- Rinse hands well under running warm water. Turn the faucet off with the paper towel (if available).
- Dry hands well using a paper towel or air dryer.



You should expect all health care staff to wash or sanitize their hands prior to and after providing any care. Do not hesitate to remind anyone who provides care to wash or sanitize their hands appropriately.

Most frequently missed spots on the hands:

- Fingertips
- Underneath the fingernails
- Between the fingers
- Between the thumb and finger