

**7. How should I clean my hands with alcohol-based hand rub?**

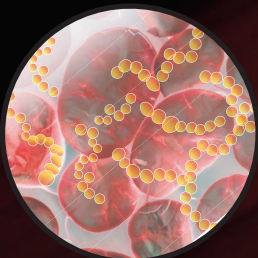
1. Squirt a small amount (approximately a loonie-size) of alcohol-based hand rub to palm of hand
2. Rub product all over hands and fingertips, between fingers, back of hands and base of thumbs
3. Rub hands for a minimum of **15 seconds** or until the product is dry

Note: The use of alcohol-based hand rub by young children is safe but should be done with supervision. A single squirt of the product on the hands is enough for a child. Store it safely so that a child cannot accidentally ingest it.

**8. Are hand wipes as effective as alcohol-based hand rubs?**

Hand wipes will remove soil from your hands but they may not be as effective in removing germs as alcohol-based hand rubs.

If there is no soap and water available, use hand wipes to remove visible dirt from your hands and then use an alcohol-based hand rub to kill the germs.



**9. What if my skin becomes dry and chapped?**

Here are a few tips:

- Apply a good hand moisturizer frequently
- Use warm (not hot) water when washing your hands
- Wear gloves or mittens in cold weather
- Wear gloves when cleaning and gardening

**10. Do artificial nails increase the amount of germs on my hands?**

Yes. Most germs on the hands are found around and under the nails. Artificial nails can provide a breeding ground for germs.

It is recommended that health care providers do not wear artificial nails, nail enhancements, hand and/or arm jewellery when providing care to their clients or patients.

For more information, call Peel Public Health at 905-799-7700 or visit [www.peelregion.ca/health](http://www.peelregion.ca/health).



# HAND HYGIENE

**What are you doing with your next 15 seconds?**



**Stop Infections!  
Wash Your Hands**

# Hand Hygiene Questions and Answers

## 1. Will hand washing help me stay healthy?

Yes. Washing your hands frequently and thoroughly will help you stay healthy. It is important to wash hands after:

1. touching common surfaces such as door handles, counters, and phones
2. using a bathroom
3. changing diapers
4. coughing or sneezing into a tissue
5. blowing your nose

## 2. Is it enough to wash my hands with just water?

No. To remove germs, you must clean your hands with running water and soap.

## 3. What is the correct way to wash hands with soap and water?

- Turn on tap
- Wet hands
- Apply soap from a soap dispenser
- Rub over all hand surfaces for at least **15 seconds**
- Rinse
- Pat hands dry with paper towel
- Turn off taps with paper towel

## 4. Should I use antibacterial soap?

Antibacterial soaps are generally not necessary. Plain soap is sufficient to remove germs that cause illness.

Antibacterial soaps can be harsh on your skin and may result in skin breakdown. Frequent use of antibacterial soap can lead to bacterial resistance, meaning that bacteria become harder to kill.

## 5. Which one is better to use - a liquid soap or a bar of soap?

Using a pump-style liquid soap dispenser is better because liquid soap has a lower risk of becoming contaminated with germs than a bar of soap. Use liquid soap until empty and then discard the dispenser.

Bar soap should be dedicated for one's personal use. If using bar soap, ensure that it is stored on a soap rack to allow it to drain and dry.

## 6. Is using alcohol-based hand rubs as good as washing hands with water?

Yes. These products are effective for washing hands as long as your hands are free of visible dirt. When buying alcohol-based hand rubs, check that they contain between 60 to 90 per cent alcohol to get good results.