



# Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care

## MODULE 2 — Hand Hygiene

# Modules in the Slide Series

1. Introduction
2. **Hand Hygiene (this module)**
3. Personal Protective Equipment
4. Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette
5. Sharps Safety
6. Safe Injection Practices
7. Sterilization and Disinfection of Patient-Care Items and Devices
8. Environmental Infection Prevention and Control
9. Dental Unit Water Quality
10. Program Evaluation

# Hand Hygiene Is Key for Prevention

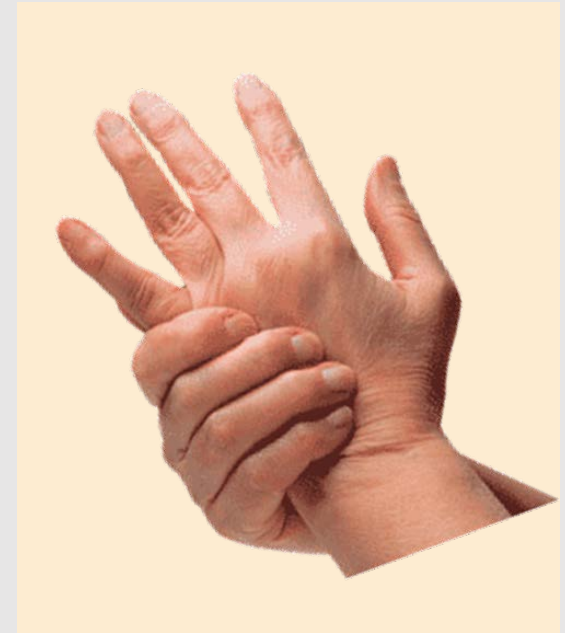
## Hand Hygiene

- Is a critical practice for preventing the transmission of pathogens in health care settings.
- Reduces harmful microorganisms on the hands.
- Compliance with hand hygiene practices is routinely used as a clinical performance indicator in hospital settings.
- Is expected by patients to be performed by all dental health care personnel (DHCP).

# Why Is Hand Hygiene Important?

## Hand Hygiene

- Hands are the most common mode of pathogen transmission.
  - Reduce spread of antimicrobial resistance.
  - Prevent health care-associated infections.



# Hand Hygiene

The term “hand hygiene” includes both handwashing with either plain soap or antimicrobial soap and use of alcohol-based hand rubs that do not require the use of water.



# Key Recommendations for Hand Hygiene

- Perform hand hygiene:
  - When hands are visibly soiled.
  - After barehanded touching of instruments, equipment, materials, and other objects likely to be contaminated by blood, saliva, or respiratory secretions.
  - Before and after treating each patient, even if gloves are worn.
  - Immediately after removing gloves.
- Use soap and water when hands are visibly soiled (e.g., blood, body fluids). Otherwise, an alcohol-based hand rub may be used.

# Hand Hygiene for Routine Dental Procedures

Scenario	Soap and Water	Antimicrobial Soap and Water	Alcohol-Based Hand Rub
If hands are visibly soiled (e.g., dirt, blood, body fluids).	YES	YES	NO
If hands are not visibly soiled.	YES	YES	YES

# Hand Hygiene for Surgical Procedures

Scenario	Soap and Water Alone	Antimicrobial Soap and Water	Soap and Water Followed by Alcohol-Based Hand Rub
Surgical hand antisepsis before gloving	NO	YES	YES

Note: soap and alcohol-based hand rubs should have a persistent effect and broad spectrum of activity.



# Hand Washing Technique

- Wet hands with water, apply soap, and rub hands together for at least 15 seconds.
- Rinse hands and dry with a disposable towel.
- Use towel to turn off faucet.



# Using an Alcohol-Based Hand Rub

- Apply to palm of one hand and rub hands together covering all surfaces until dry.
- Use amount recommended by manufacturer's instructions.
- Do not use if hands are visibly soiled.



# Surgical Hand Hygiene

- Antimicrobial soap—scrub hands and forearms for length of time recommended by manufacturer.

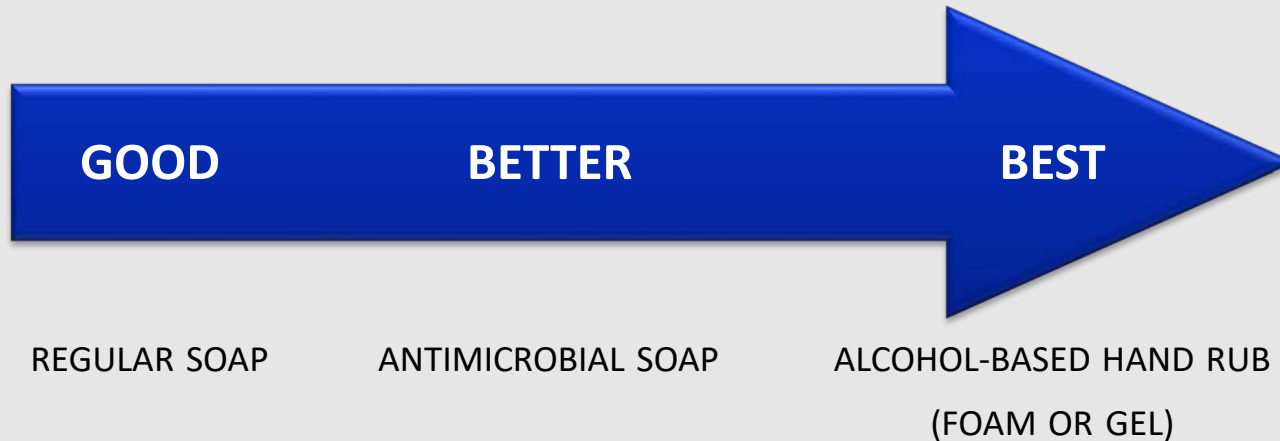
OR

- Alcohol-based hand rub—follow manufacturer's recommendations.
  - Before applying, prewash hands and forearms with nonantimicrobial soap.



# Efficacy of Hand Hygiene Preparations in Reducing Bacteria

Alcohol-Based Hand Rubs Are More Effective in Killing Bacteria Than Soap and Water



# Alcohol-Based Preparations

## Benefits

- Rapid and effective antimicrobial action.
- Improved skin condition.
- More accessible than sinks.

## Limitations

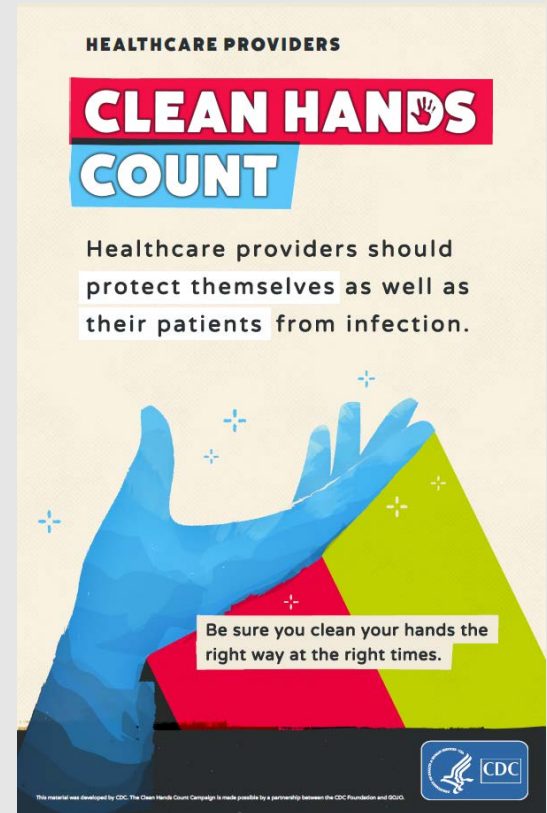
- Cannot be used if hands are visibly soiled.
- Must be stored away from high temperatures or flames.
- Hand softeners and glove powders may build up on hands.

# Special Hand Hygiene Considerations

- Use hand lotions to prevent skin dryness.
- Consider compatibility of hand care products with gloves (e.g., mineral oils and petroleum bases may cause early glove failure).
- Keep fingernails short.
- Avoid artificial nails.
- Avoid hand jewelry that may tear gloves.

# Reminders in the Workplace

- Reminders can be used to prompt DHCP about the importance of hand hygiene.
- Reminders also inform patients about the standard of care they should expect.



Source: Clean Hands Count Promotional Materials

# Hand Hygiene Resources

- CDC. *Guideline for Hand Hygiene in Health-Care Settings*
- CDC. *Guidelines for Infection Control in Dental Health-Care Settings—2003*
- CDC. Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings website
  - Hand Hygiene Training Course
  - Clean Hands Count Campaign
- CDC. *Summary of Infection Prevention Practices in Dental Settings: Basic Expectations for Safe Care*



# End of Module 2

For more information, contact Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)

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*The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the CDC.*