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ParamCARE Foundation is a non-profit organization, with IRS 501(C)(3) certification, ParamCARE foundation believes in total Devotion, Dedication, and Diligence. We outreach and educate the people to enhance physical, mental and social well-being, by adopting healthy life style and preventing disease, to build a healthier society.

## INTRODUCTION:

⇒ Hand washing (The spelling "handwashing" in one word is also common). is the act of cleaning one's hands with or without the use of water or another liquid, or soap for the purpose of removing soil, dirt, and or microorganisms (including bacteria or viruses).

⇒ Handwashing is like a "do-it-yourself" vaccine it involves five simple and effective steps (Wet, Lather, Scrub, Rinse, Dry) you can take to reduce the spread of diarrheal and respiratory illness so you can stay healthy. Regular handwashing, particularly before and after certain activities, is one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick, and prevent the spread of germs to others. It's quick, it's simple, and it can keep us all from getting sick. Handwashing is a win for everyone, except the germs.

⇒ Medical hand-washing became mandatory long after Hungarian physician Ignaz Semmelweis discovered its effectiveness (in 1846) in preventing disease in a hospital environment.

⇒ The phrase "washing one's hands of" originates from the bible passage in Matthew, where Pontius Pilate washed his hands of the decision to crucify Jesus Christ, something, means declaring one's unwillingness to take responsibility for the thing or share complicity in it has become a phrase with a much wider usage in some English communities.

⇒ In Shakespeare's Macbeth, Lady Macbeth begins to compulsively wash her hands in an attempt to cleanse an imagined stain, representing her guilty conscience regarding crimes she had committed and induced her husband to commit.

⇒ It has also been found that people, after having recalled or contemplated unethical acts, tend to wash hands more often than others, and tend to value hand washing equipment more. Furthermore, those who are allowed to wash their hands after such contemplation are less likely to engage in other "cleansing" compensatory actions, such as volunteering.

⇒ United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to more actively promoted hand hygiene as an important way to prevent the spread of infection after the outbreak of foodborne associated infections in the 1980s and swine flu in 2009 led to increased awareness of the importance of washing hands with soap to protect oneself from such infectious diseases.

Symbolic hand washing, using water only to wash hands, is a part of ritual hand washing featured in many religions, including Baha'i Faith, Hinduism, and tevilah and netlist yadayim in Judaism. Similar to these are the practices of Lavabo in Christianity, Wudu in Islam and Misogi in Shintō.

Your health is in  
**YOUR HAND**

*Clean*

**AMERICANS' HAND HYGIENE HABITS**

A majority of Americans are getting caught up in handwashing when it comes to their hygiene habits. A survey of 1,000 U.S. adults by SCA, a global hygiene company, revealed that consumers are unaware of the importance of hand hygiene and their practices may be grossly misguided.

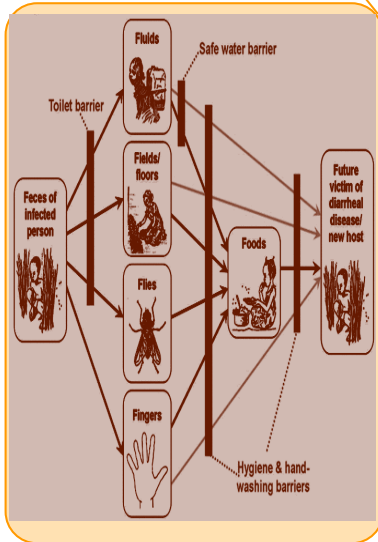
- 57% say they practice good hand hygiene and wash their hands regularly.
- 58% have witnessed others, leaving a public restroom, without washing their hands.
- 26% without soap.
- 33% without scrub.
- 36% without dry.
- MORE THAN HALF do not wash their hands after sneezing, coughing or after blowing their nose.

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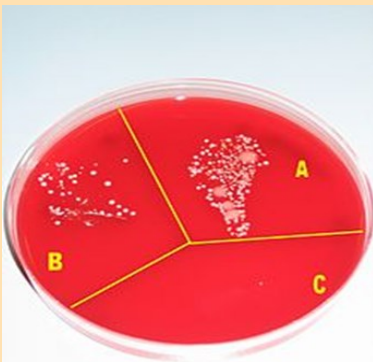
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**Handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from getting sick.**



Microbial growth on a cultivation plate without hand washing procedures (A), after washing hands with soap (B) and after disinfection with alcohol (C).



### WHEN SHOULD YOU WASH YOUR HANDS?

Handwashing more than six times a day with soap and water is considered the basic hygiene minimum by the Global Hygiene Council

The main medical purpose of washing hands is to cleanse the hands of pathogens (including bacteria/viruses) and chemicals which can cause personal harm or disease. This is especially important for people who handle food or work in the medical field, but it is also an important practice for the general public.

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage

**“ Handwashing is an important part of your job.”**

### HEALTH BENEFITS OF HAND WASHING:

Handwashing is an easy, inexpensive, and effective way to prevent the spread of germs and keep people healthy

Germs can spread quickly. A healthier community means healthier employees. Handwashing education in the community:

- helps minimize the spread of influenza
- Reduces the number of people who get sick with diarrhea by 31%
- avoiding respiratory infections in the general population by 21%
- Reduces diarrheal illness in people with weakened immune systems by 58%
- a preventive measure for infant deaths at their home birth deliveries
- improved hand washing practices have been shown to lead to small improvements in the length growth in children under five years of age Handwashing is one of the best ways to avoid getting sick and spreading illness to others. Reducing illness increases productivity due to: Less time spent at the doctor’s office More time spent at work or school
- For kids, washing hands can be a fun and entertaining activity. It is simple enough for even very young children to understand.
- Handwashing gives children and adults a chance to take an active role in their own health.
- Once kids learn how to properly wash their hands, they can—and often do—show their parents and siblings and encourage them to wash hands, too.
- Parents can help keep their families healthy by teaching their kids good handwashing technique and reminding to wash their hands, this can help family members get sick less often and miss less work and school.
- In corporate settings, employers should promote employee handwashing and encourage them to also because handwashing is an easy, inexpensive, and effective way to prevent the spread of germs and keep employees healthy results in fewer employee sick days
- Handwashing is one of the best ways to avoid getting sick and spreading illness to others.
- Sick employees are less productive even when they come to work and they may also spread illness to others at work.

### DRYING WITH TOWELS OR HAND DRIERS ?

Effective drying of the hands is an essential part of the hand hygiene process. The scientists also carried out tests to establish whether there was the potential for cross contamination of other washroom users and the washroom environment as a result of each type of drying method. They found that:

- The jet-air dryer which blows air out of the unit at claimed speeds of 400 mph, was capable of blowing micro-organisms from the hands and the unit and potentially contaminating other washroom users and the washroom environment up to 2 meters away.
  - Use of a warm-air hand dryer spread micro-organisms up to 0.25 meters from the dryer.
  - Paper towels showed no significant spread of micro-organisms.
- In 2008, a study was conducted by the University of Westminster, London, and sponsored by the paper-towel industry the European Tissue Symposium, to compare the levels of hygiene offered by paper towels, warm-air hand dryers and the more modern jet-air hand dryers the key findings were:
- after washing and drying hands with the warm-air dryer, the total number of bacteria was found to increase on average on the finger pads by 194% and on the palms by 254%
  - drying with the jet-air dryer resulted in an increase on average of the total number of bacteria on the finger pads by 42% and on the palms by 15%
  - after washing and drying hands with a paper towel, the total number of bacteria was reduced on average on the finger pads by up to 76% and on the palms by up to 77%.
  - Effect on bacterial count after drying the hands were observed: Paper towels and roll Decrease of 24% bacterial count while hot air Increase of 12% bacterial count.

**Sanitation is not only the right of every human being but it is essential need when it comes to disease prevention & reduction of mortality rate.**

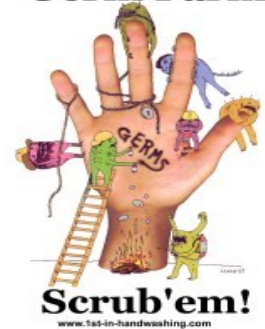
**GLOBAL HANDWASHING DAY (GHD)** is a campaign to motivate and mobilize people around the world to improve their handwashing habits by washing their hands with soap at critical moments throughout each day. The first Global Handwashing Day took place on 15 October 2008, it was initiated by the Public Private Partnership for Handwashing (PPPHW) in August 2008 at the annual World Water Week in Stockholm, Sweden the date was appointed by the UN General Assembly.

**The aims of Global Handwashing Day are to:**

- Foster and support a general culture of handwashing with soap in all societies
- Shine a spotlight on the state of handwashing in each country
- Raise awareness about the benefits of handwashing with soap.

Impact on society of Global Handwashing day has increased awareness about life-style and diseases caused by poor sanitations

### Germ Farm



**The World Health Organization has "Five Moments" for washing hands**

- ◆ before patient care
- ◆ after environmental contact
- ◆ after exposure to blood/body fluids
- ◆ before an aseptic task, and
- ◆ after patient care.

**Despite widespread knowledge of the importance of handwashing, there is still room for improvement. A recent study showed that only 31% of men and 65% of women washed their hands after using a public restroom. visit [www.cdc.gov/handwashing](http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing).**

## HOW DO YOU WASH YOUR HANDS?

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend the following steps for hand-washing:  
Follow these simple steps:

- Wet your hands with running water — either warm or cold.
- Apply liquid, bar or powder soap.
- Lather well.
- Rub your hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds. Pay special attention to your wrists, the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your fingernails ...
- Rinse well.
- Dry your hands with a clean or disposable towel or air dryer.
- If possible, use a towel or your elbow to turn off the faucet.
- If soap and water are not available, use hand or alcohol-based hand wipe that contains at least 60% ethyl alcohol or isopropanol. Carry one or both with you when you travel, and keep them in your car or purse. These products can help reduce the number of germs on your hands, but they do not get rid of all types of germs. **Hand sanitizers are not as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.**

## Be A Germ-Buster

### WASH YOUR HANDS



**References:** All the references, quotes and pictures are taken from CDC and Clip Art for the purpose of general awareness of the public hygiene only

For more information on handwashing, please visit CDC's Handwashing website.

Appreciation: Readers views, suggestions, support, references are welcome

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