



Sussex Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust



Hand hygiene

Information for patients
and visitors

About this leaflet

This leaflet explains the different ways to clean your hands and how, by simply washing your hands you can help to reduce the spread of infection.

Good hand hygiene is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of many infections, including those that pose a particular problem in hospitals, such as MRSA (methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus), C. difficile and Flu (influenza) type illnesses.

Hands may look clean, but the germs that cause infections cannot be seen by the naked eye.

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Hand washing

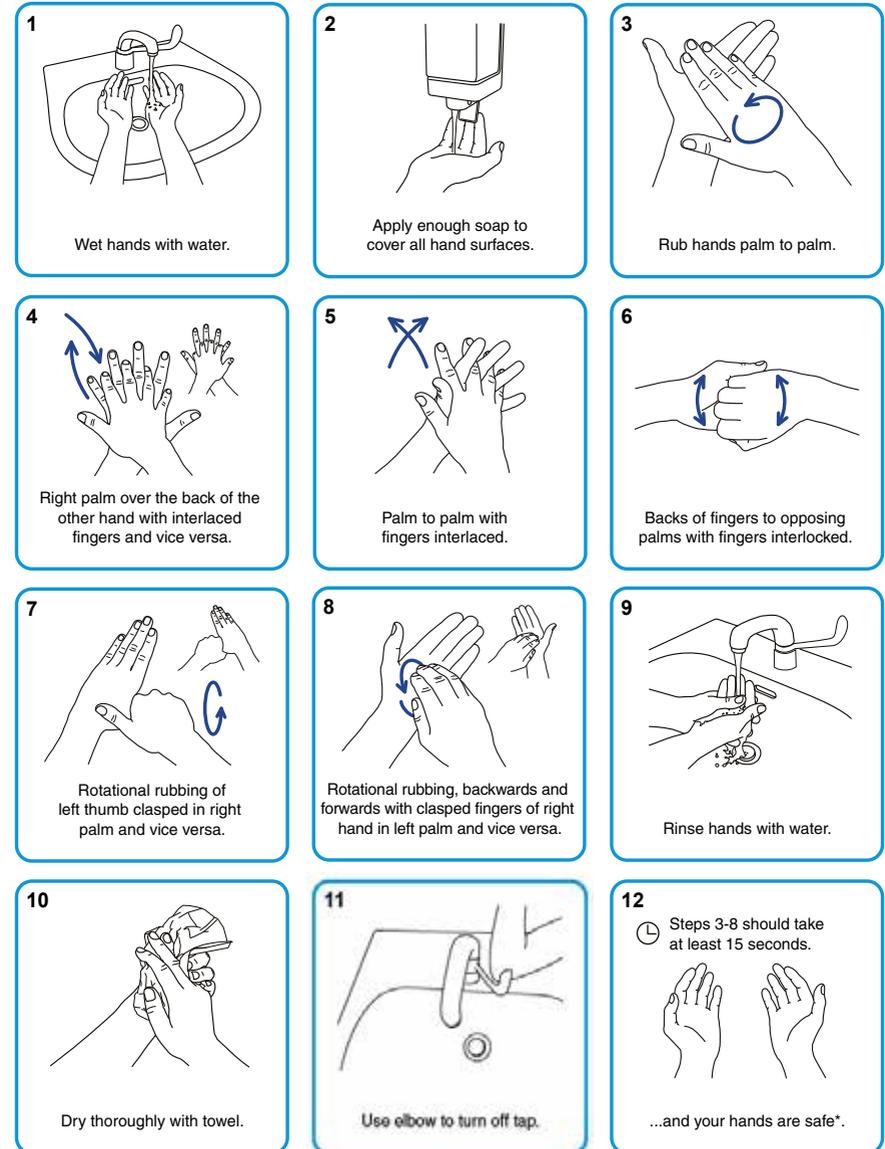
How to wash hands

- A good hand washing technique involves wetting the hands under warm running water before applying liquid soap.
- The hands should be rubbed together for 15 – 20 seconds so that the soapy water comes into contact with all surfaces of each hand
- It is important to wash under any rings and it is advisable to remove wristwatches before washing
- Hands should be rinsed thoroughly and then dried with paper towels.

Visual hand washing guide

See the adjacent step-by-step guide for hand washing.

Steps 3-8 should take at least 15 seconds.



Adapted from the World Health Organization
Part of the National Infection Prevention and Control Manual (NIPCM),
Available at: <http://www.nipcm.hps.scot.nhs.uk/>
Produced by: Health Protection Scotland, July 2018.



Hand sanitiser

When should I use sanitiser?

- Hands should be free of visible dirt
- Enough hand sanitiser should be used to completely cover all the surfaces of each hand
- The hands should be rubbed together until the solution has evaporated.

Hand sanitiser/ alcohol hand rub is a quick, convenient and effective alternative to hand washing, but only if your hands are not visibly dirty.

This is useful when soap and water for hand washing is not readily available.

Washing hands with soap and water is always preferable to using hand sanitiser where possible.

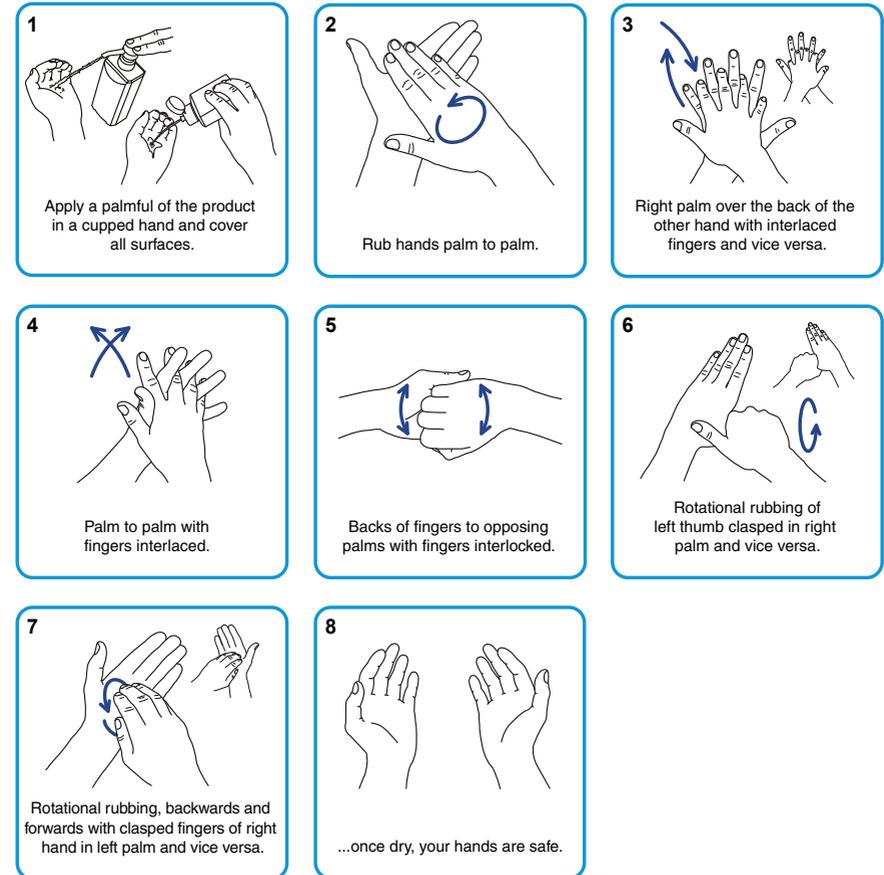
Sanitiser facilities

Please ask a member of staff for the location of the nearest hand washing facilities or hand sanitiser dispenser.

Our staff should wash their hands regularly, and you are welcome to ask if they have cleaned their hands before they come into contact with you.

Visual hand washing with sanitiser guide

See the step-by-step guide below for hand washing with sanitiser.



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When to wash hands

Key times

Remember to wash your hands at these key times:

- After going to the toilet
- Before touching food and eating
- If they look or feel dirty
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose
- Before and after handling a medical device such as a urinary catheter
- Before and after visiting patients.

If you notice that stocks of soap, paper towels or alcohol hand gel are low, please tell a member of Sussex Partnership staff immediately.

How to get in touch with our services

If you would like more information about infection control, or if you have any concerns, please talk to a member of staff who will be happy to speak with you. Our Infection Prevention and Control team can offer support and advice.

Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS are here to help when you need advice or support, if you have any concerns, or want to tell us what you think about our services.

The team are available Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm. If there is no one available to take your call or it is outside of these hours, you can leave a confidential message on our answer machine and you will be contacted as soon as possible.

Tel: **0300 304 2198**

Email: pals@sussexpartnership.nhs.uk

Web: www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/pals

Post: PALS, Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust,
Swandean, Arundel Road, Worthing,
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www.headsoncharity.org

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