

What To Do

Before.....gives you the facts and makes you handwashing savvy

Protect Yourself

What To Do Before..... A Consumer's Guide to Handwashing

Q. Are there other ways hospital personnel can wash their hands?

A: Yes, hospital personnel are now using waterless systems known as hand sanitizers, such as the one pictured below.



Q. Is there anything else I can do to help prevent the spread of germs and infection?

A: YES. After touching objects in your room or returning to your room after being in another part of the hospital wash your hands. Don't rub your eyes or YUK! put your fingers in your nose or mouth. Germs enter your body through your eyes, nose and mouth and we don't want this to happen.

Q. What else are hospitals doing to prevent infection?

A: Hospitals work hard at keeping things clean and germ free; however, they need your help when it comes to reminding doctors, nurses, medical techs, food servers, housekeeping and visitors to wash their hands. Show the staff that you're handwashing savvy and the next time someone enters your room just say "*wash your hands, please.*" You'll be glad you did.

It's a Fact!

Being in the hospital is risky business and nothing drives home this point more than knowing that thousands of hospital patients a year develop infections..... You can reduce some of the risk just by knowing what to do.... Handwashing stops germs dead in their tracks and prevents the spread of infection.....

Q. Why are there so many germs in hospitals?

A: Because hospitals are full of sick people! Seriously, there are more germs in hospitals because so many people are packed into a small area; some of them with very serious illnesses. This means that the nasty germs that cause infections are everywhere. They hide on the surfaces of walls, trays, toilets, cups, instruments and even ductwork, but the place they like to hide best is on the [hands](#).

Q. How do germs spread and cause infections?

A: [Hands!](#) [Hands down](#), it's the hands that spread most of the germs that lurk in the halls, waiting to strike at hospital patients like you. Every time a doctor, nurse, medical technician, food server or visitor touches an object, germs go along for the ride.



Q. What can be done to reduce the chances of getting a hospital infection?

A: Every time hospital staff members or visitors come into your room, ask them to wash their hands. Make sure that housekeeping always uses an antiseptic solution when they wipe the tray in your room along with the windowsill, doorknobs, bed frame and other objects. And, always wash your hands after using the toilet or touching food trays, medicine containers or cups. When someone enters your room, don't shake hands: [Do you really know where that hand has been?](#)

Q: If I'm always asking the staff to wash their hands before they approach my bed won't they get mad and ignore me?

A: NO! The hospital staff works hard to prevent infections so they'll understand why you asked. They know the value of handwashing and the important role it plays in preventing the spread of infections. Also, when you show them the cute little "Did you wash your hands?" [bug](#), they'll get the message.

