

## Sample Hand Hygiene Policy and Procedure

Name of Facility will ensure all employees follow safe and effective hand hygiene procedures. Hand hygiene is the single most important step in preventing the spread of infection. Hand Hygiene means cleaning your hands by either handwashing (washing hands with soap and water) or using an alcohol hand rub (AHR). When hands are not visibly soiled and in most situations, AHR is the most effective product for reducing the number of germs on the hands of healthcare providers.

### When to Perform Hand Hygiene with Soap and Water

- When hands are visibly dirty or feel sticky
- After handling stool or emesis
- After known or suspected exposure to *Clostridium difficile* or *Norovirus*
- Before and after eating
- After using a restroom

### When to Perform Hand Hygiene with Alcohol Hand Rub (AHR)

- For everything else
- There is no limit to the number of times AHR can be used for consecutive hand hygiene opportunities, other than the examples listed above

### Technique for Using AHR

- Put product on hands and rub together
- Use amount needed to cover all surfaces of hands and fingers
- Keep rubbing together until hands are dry
- This should take 15-20 seconds

### Techniques for Washing Hands with Soap and Water

- Turn on water and wet your hands
- Apply soap to your hands and rub your hands together vigorously for 15 seconds, covering all surfaces of the hands and fingers
- Rinse your hands with water and use a paper towel to dry
- Use paper towel to turn off faucet and to open the bathroom door
- Dispose of paper towel in appropriate trash receptacle

### Some Examples of When to Perform Hand Hygiene during Patient Care

- Before and after having direct contact with a patient's intact skin (taking a pulse or blood pressure, performing physical examinations, lifting the patient in bed)
- After contact with blood, body fluids or excretions, mucous membranes, non-intact skin, or wound dressings
- Prior to aseptic procedures (fingerstick, performing urinary catheter insertion, administering IV medications or infusions)
- After contact with inanimate objects (including medical equipment) in the immediate vicinity of the patient
- If hands will be moving from a contaminated-body site to a clean-body site during patient care
- Prior to putting on gloves
- After glove removal

### **Lotions and Creams**

- Provide staff with a facility approved lotions to prevent and decrease skin dryness that are compatible with hand hygiene products and types of gloves used
- Consider small, pocket-size containers for individual use
- Multi-use lotion bottles or wall mounted dispensers must never be refilled

### **Fingernails**

- Germs can live under artificial fingernails. Neither hand washing nor use of AHR can remove all of these germs
- Do not wear artificial fingernails, extensions, gel nails, acrylic nails or nail jewelry
- Keep natural nail tips less than ¼ inch long
- Regular nail polish with no chips is allowed
- Limit jewelry on hands and wrists because they interfere with hand hygiene.

### **Glove Use: When and How to Wear Gloves**

- Standard Precautions requires donning non sterile gloves when there is a risk of contact with blood or body fluids of any kind. Gloves are not required for routine contact with intact skin. Overuse of gloves can lead to a lack of hand hygiene, which then actually increases risk of organism transmission.
- Wearing gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene. Dirty gloves can contaminate hands during removal
- Always clean your hands before putting on gloves and after removing gloves
- Steps for Glove Use:
  - Choose the right size and type of gloves for the task
  - Perform hand hygiene before putting on gloves
  - Put on gloves before touching a patient's non-intact skin, open wounds or mucous membranes, such as the mouth, nose, and eyes and/or surrounding environment
  - Remove gloves, perform hand hygiene and put on a new pair of gloves during patient care if the hands will move from a contaminated body-site (e.g., perineal area) to a clean body-site (e.g., face)
  - Remove gloves after completing care and done having contacting with a patient and/or the surrounding environment (including medical equipment) using proper technique to avoid hand contamination
  - Failure to remove gloves after caring for a patient may lead to the spread of potentially deadly germs from one patient to another
  - Do not wear the same pair of gloves for the care of more than one patient
  - Do not re-use gloves
  - Always perform hand hygiene before putting on gloves and after removing gloves

### **References:**

Guideline for Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5116.pdf>

Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings: <http://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/>Add ref for state memo or some other resource?