

Policy and Procedure Template for Hand Hygiene

[Name of clinic, address, logo]

Date of Creation/Last revision:

Instructions for template use: This template is an example of a policy and procedure that can be adapted for use in a clinical office setting. You are responsible for ensuring that the information is up to date. Fill in the blanks with information specific to your clinic. Please review and delete items that are not relevant to your setting, and add items as needed. For more information about IPAC policies and procedures, refer to the resources below or visit the IPAC Information for Healthcare Professionals page on halton.ca.

Purpose:

Hand hygiene refers to any action that includes the removal of visible soil and/or killing of microorganisms on the hands. Alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) or soap and water may be used. The purpose of hand hygiene is to prevent transmission of infectious agents between people during the delivery of healthcare.

Written office/clinic policies and procedures shall be followed at all times.

This policy shall be reviewed and updated regularly and as needed.

Staff shall receive training on hand hygiene at orientation, at regular intervals, and as needed.

Indications for hand hygiene

1. Perform hand hygiene as described in the 4 Moments of Hand Hygiene:
 - before initial contact with a client/patient/resident or their environment;
 - before an aseptic procedure;
 - after body fluid exposure; and
 - after patient/ patient environment contact.
2. Perform hand hygiene when hands are visibly soiled, before putting on gloves, before preparing, handling or serving food or medications, and after removing gloves.
3. Perform hand hygiene after personal hygiene activities (e.g. blowing nose, using the toilet or eating).
4. Perform hand hygiene prior to and after reprocessing of reusable medical devices and after environmental cleaning.
5. Assist clients/patients/residents/visitors with hand hygiene by ensuring that they have access to ABHR/soap and water, providing reminders and posting signage.

Procedure for hand hygiene

When using ABHR:

1. Ensure hands are clean and dry.
2. Apply 1-2 pumps of product onto one palm.
3. Spread product over all surfaces of hands.
4. Continue rubbing until product is dry. This should take a minimum of 15 seconds.
5. Begin care activities once hands are completely dry.

When using soap and water:

1. Wet hands with warm water.
2. Apply liquid soap.
3. Lather all surfaces of the hands for 15 seconds.
4. Thoroughly rinse soap from hands while rubbing hands together.
5. Dry hands by blotting with a paper towel.
6. Turn off taps with paper towel.

Products for hand hygiene

1. Apply 70-90 per cent ABHR as the first choice for hand hygiene when hands are not visibly soiled.
2. When hands are visibly soiled (e.g. with dirt, blood, body fluids or other substances), wash with liquid or foam soap and water.
3. Ensure ABHR and/or hand washing sink are available at the point-of-care (i.e. the location where the client/patient/resident will receive care from the healthcare provider).
4. Dispense ABHR and liquid soap from disposable dispensers and discard the dispenser when empty. Do not refill the dispenser.
5. Use dedicated sinks for hand washing. Location of hand sinks: _____.
6. Ensure paper towel and a waste receptacle are available for use at all hand washing sinks.

Hand care

1. Use ABHR with emollient as the primary hand hygiene product to prevent against contact dermatitis and maintain hand skin integrity.
2. Regularly use hand moisturizing skin care products to protect against skin break down caused by frequent hand hygiene.
3. Keep nails clean and short and ensure that fingernail polish, if worn, is fresh and in good condition. Do not use artificial nails and nail enhancements if providing direct patient care.
4. Avoid hand and arm jewelry. Rings should be smooth without projections if worn.

References:

1. Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee. Best Practices for Hand Hygiene in All Health Care Settings, 4th edition, 2014. https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/B/2014/bp-hand-hygiene.pdf?sc_lang=en