The Importance of Hand Hygiene

Training material developed in collaboration with:
Objectives

- Identify infection risks for staff and patients
- Understand basic steps to hand hygiene using Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines
- Learn effective and efficient methods to sanitize hands
- Learn how to engage your clinic in infection prevention initiatives
Pre-Test

1. Why is protecting patient safety a concern?
   A. Protecting patient safety
   B. It can increase patient satisfaction
   C. It demonstrates you care about your patients, staff, and yourself
   D. All of the above

2. What are the benefits of hand sanitizer?
   A. It is accessible
   B. Convenient to use
   C. 70% effective
   D. A. and B. are both correct
3. What are the CDC recommendations for use of hand sanitizers?
   A. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content
   B. Wash before you have contact with a patient
   C. Wash before and after you have contact with a patient
   D. All of the above

4. How can you change patient perception of safety?
   A. Use sanitizer in front of patient
   B. Mention you are cleaning your hands
   C. Have sanitizers located throughout the clinic
   D. All of the above
Infection Risks

- 66%* of people admit to not washing their hands after using the bathroom
- We commonly shake hands with others and then touch our mouth or nose
- We often come into contact with people who are sick

* Source Bradley Corporation
There are 3 primary methods for maintaining hand hygiene to protect yourself, your staff, and your patients:

1. Gloves
2. Soap and water
3. Waterless hand sanitizer
Pro’s and Con’s of Hand Hygiene methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloves</th>
<th>Regular hand washing (soap and water)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro’s</td>
<td>Pro’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Simple/effective</td>
<td>• Simple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fast to use</td>
<td>• Highly effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Easy to see</td>
<td>• Easy to see</td>
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Waterless hand hygiene (>60% alcohol)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pro’s</th>
<th>Con’s</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Simple</td>
<td>• Expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fast to use</td>
<td>• Added waste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Effective</td>
<td>• Not effective when hands are visibly soiled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accessible</td>
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Waterless Hand Hygiene Agents Reduce Bacteria

![Graph showing bacterial reduction over time after disinfection for different agents.]

- **Alcohol-based handrub (70% Isopropanol)** shows a significant reduction in bacterial levels within the first 60 minutes, maintaining effectiveness up to 180 minutes.
- **Antimicrobial soap** also demonstrates effective bacterial reduction, though slightly less pronounced than the alcohol-based handrub.
- **Plain soap** shows moderate bacterial reduction, particularly in the initial 60 minutes.

The graph plots bacterial reduction in log percentages (% log) over time after disinfection, with time points at 0, 60, and 180 minutes.
Policy Recommendations from the CDC

- Use soap and water if hands are visibly soiled and continue washing with soap and water throughout the day.
- Make waterless hand wash your choice if hands are not visibly soiled.
- Use sanitizer before and after patient contact – “Foam in Foam out”
TIPS for using waterless hand sanitizers

- Watch expiration dates! – that sale price may not be a bargain
- Do not refill containers since that can introduce contaminants to the product
- Sanitizers with skin softeners are just as effective and easier on the skin
How to Engage your Clinic

- Place sanitizers in many areas – reception area, treatment rooms, etc.
- Get in the habit of using sanitizers – encourage regular use by providers and staff
- Understand these small steps increase patient satisfaction of your clinic
• Recognize good practices – “Good job!”
• We recommend hand hygiene training for all new hires and annual training for all employees
• Maintain regular dialogue of the importance of patient safety
Find ways to demonstrate to the patient that you are cleaning your hands regularly:

1. Use waterless hand wash in visible locations, out of the reach of children
2. Clean your hands in front of patient
3. State what you are doing so patient remembers: “For example: “Excuse me while I clean my hands before we begin.”
4. If using a sink outside the treatment room, walk into the room with paper towel from washing hands and the patient will see you throw it away.
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Answers

1. D
2. D
3. D
4. D