

Concerned a member of staff has not cleaned their hands?

It's ok to remind them. Sometimes staff can forget and they will not feel offended if you remind them. Sometimes they may have cleaned their hands out of your sight, so asking them will reassure you they have cleaned their hands.

Remember it's OK to ask!

This leaflet has been produced to give you information about hand hygiene. It explains the different ways to clean your hands and how, by simply washing your hands you can help to reduce infections in hospital, both for **yourself and others**.

Protect Patients, Protect Yourself!

If you think there is anything missing from this leaflet or if you have any suggestions that could help us reduce or prevent infections, please e-mail us at ruh-tr.CriticalCareINFECTIONCONTROL@nhs.net.

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Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital.

Email ruh-tr.PatientAdviceandLiaisonService@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656.

Hand Hygiene

Patient and Visitors Information

Critical Care Services



CLEAN HANDS SAVE LIVES

The Importance of Hand Hygiene

Hands are used every day for many different tasks and as a result of contact with other people, equipment or surroundings they can become contaminated with germs. Hands that are not properly cleaned can be responsible for the spread of a wide variety of germs, some of which could cause infection. Hand hygiene is the most important method of preventing and controlling the spread of infections.

Types of Hand Hygiene

Hand washing

Hand washing with soap and water is the most common way of cleaning the hands and is the best way to get your hands clean if they are visibly dirty. It is important to wash your hands:

- Before entering or leaving a patient ward area.
- Before and after any contact with a patient.
- After each visit to the toilet.
- Before every meal.
- Before assisting someone with their food.
- Before handling, preparing or serving food.
- Before and after using any medical equipment or facilities.
- After coughing or sneezing into the hands.
- When the hands are visibly soiled.

Hand Sanitiser

This is a quick, convenient and effective alternative to hand washing only if your hands are not visibly dirty.

Facilities for washing hands and using a hand sanitiser are available on the unit, please ask a member of staff for the location of the nearest hand washing facilities or hand sanitiser dispenser.

When dealing with diarrhoea and vomiting illnesses, soap and water should always be used. In this case, the use of hand sanitiser is **NOT** recommended.

Please make use of these facilities to reduce the risk of infectious germs being transferred around the unit. If you require any further information please speak to the Nurse in Charge.

Hand Hygiene Technique

Hand Washing with Soap and Water

- Wet hands under running water and apply liquid soap.
- Rub hands together, ensuring all areas are covered – this can be achieved by following the 7-step diagram as illustrated.
- Dry hands thoroughly using a disposable paper towel.
- Dispose of used paper towel in appropriate waste bin.



Using Hand Sanitiser

- Apply hand sanitiser to dry hands.
- Rub hands together, ensuring all areas are covered – follow the 7-step diagram as illustrated.
- Allow hand sanitiser to dry on your hands.