Handwashing and hand sanitizing

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs in most situations. If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Handwashing

• Washing hands for at least 20 seconds can keep you healthy and prevent the spread of respiratory infections from one person to the next
• Wash your hands thoroughly and often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds using the six steps below

1 Key times to wash your hands include the following:
• After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing (Note: cover your nose and mouth with either disposable tissue or into the pit of your elbow when coughing or sneezing)
• Before, during, and after preparing food
• Before handling ready-to-eat products
• After handling raw products (specifically meats, egg, fish, and other raw proteins)
• Before eating food
• Before putting gloves on and after taking them off
• After removing a face covering
• Before and after touching your face, eyes, nose, or mouth
• After touching another person
• After touching any commonly touched surface or object
• After touching any containers, boxes, bags, or other items from outside the restaurant or food preparation facility
• After you have been in a public place and touched an item or surface that may be frequently touched by other people
• After using the toilet (wash hands in the bathroom and again when re-entering the work area)
• After touching garbage

2 Follow these six steps every time you wash your hands
1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (preferably warm but cold works well, too), turn off the tap, and apply soap
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds (humming the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice takes about 20 seconds)
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water
5. Dry your hands using a clean paper towel or air dry them
6. Use your paper towel to turn of the faucet so you do not re-contaminate your hands

• Workers should watch one of the videos available in English and Spanish on the CDC website to learn proper handwashing technique: https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/videos.html
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Hand Sanitizing¹

- Washing hands with soap and water for 20 seconds is preferred because it is more effective than hand sanitizer for inactivating the Covid-19 virus; if hands are visibly dirty, you must wash them with soap and water
- If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer may be used
- CDC recommends using alcohol-based hand sanitizers with greater than 60% alcohol
- How to use hand sanitizer
- Apply the gel product to the palm of one hand (read the label to learn the correct amount).
- Rub your hands together to cover all surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry

Caution! Swallowing alcohol-based hand sanitizers can cause alcohol poisoning if more than a couple of mouthfuls are swallowed

¹ Adapted from:
https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html
https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/hand-sanitizer-use.html