

HealthyCleaning101 Presents:

SAFE CLEANING CHEAT SHEET – HANDWASHING

SAFETY FIRST! Always read and follow the label on any product you use.

“When should I wash my hands?”

- Before and after eating
- Before and after handling/preparing food
- Before and after handling young children
- After using the restroom
- After touching animals
- After touching a public surface
- When your hands are dirty
- If you or someone around you is sick

“I know that I have to wash my hands... but how do I decide which **product to use?**”

Your options to choose from are generally:

- **Bar soaps:** cleans the skin by removing dirt and oils
- **Liquid or foaming hand soaps:** dispenses a single “dose” required for getting hands clean
- **Hand sanitizers:** kills germs on the hands, without the need for soap and water
- **Wipes:** wipes away dirt from hands

“What’s even **in those products?**”

Common ingredients:

- **Cleaning agents/surfactants:** help lift the dirt and germs off your hands
- **Moisturizers:** leave your hands feeling soft and smooth
- **Fragrances:** give your hands a pleasing scent
- **Germ-killing agents:** kill the germs that cause illness. Some examples:
 - **Alcohol** – used in hand sanitizers and wipes
 - **Benzalkonium chloride** – used in hand sanitizers and wipes
 - **Benzethonium chloride** – used in hand sanitizers and wipes

“Now that I know the background, how should I wash my hands so that they get cleaned properly?”



1. **Wet hands** with warm running water prior to reaching for your choice of soap.
2. Rub hands together to make a **lather**. Do this away from running water, so the lather isn't washed away.
3. Wash the front and back of hands, between fingers and under nails. Continue washing for **15 seconds** or more.
4. **Rinse** both hands well under warm running water.
5. Dry hands **thoroughly** with a clean towel or air dryer.
6. **Alcohol-based hand sanitizers** or gels or antibacterial wipes are useful alternatives if soap and water are unavailable (for example, when traveling in the car or taxi on the way to a business meeting, before eating an in-flight meal or snack, or outdoor work settings).

“What other safety information should I know about?”

The product label has loads of important information – from ingredients to safety instructions. It's a good idea to have your provincial Poison Control Centre number on hand, which can be located here: <http://www.capcc.ca/>. If you ever have any questions about a product, visit the company's website or call their 1-800 number, which is listed on all CCSPA member companies' products.

Washing your hands is one of the most effective ways to protect yourself and others from getting sick! Using the information on this sheet, you can stay safe from illnesses such as the flu and the common cold.