

## Handwashing—your best defence

*A simple thing like a handshake is a warm welcome to a friend—but it's also an invitation to germs. In fact, your hands play a major role in the spread of bacteria and viruses that can cause illness.*

Think about the things you do each day that bring you in contact with germs—going to the washroom, handling raw meat, stroking pets and taking out the garbage.

If you forget to wash or sanitize your hands, what will your hands have touched that will give germs a chance to spread? You may have touched food, a telephone, a door knob or money. The list is endless and so are the ways you can pick up and pass along bacteria and viruses that can make you or others sick.

### Go on the attack

Handwashing is one of the best ways to stop bacteria and viruses from spreading. It's not new, but it works! It gets rid of dirt and germs before they can find their way into our bodies. As more bacteria become resistant to antibiotics, proper handwashing is essential in protecting your health.

### Handwashing with soap and water

To wash hands properly, rub all parts of the hands with soap and water for at least 10 seconds. Follow the steps in the diagram below.



### Disinfecting hands with alcohol sanitizers

Sanitizers can be used for extra protection after washing with soap and water, or when soap and water

are unavailable. Follow these steps to maximize your protection:

- 1 apply enough sanitizer (about the size of a dime) to palms
- 2 rub hands together, massaging sanitizer between fingers and on the backs of hands
- 3 keep rubbing until hands are dry; paper towels are not needed

### Additional tips

Pay special attention to the areas of the hands most often missed, like between your fingers or nail beds. Other things to keep in mind:

- ▶ keep nails short and clean
- ▶ avoid wearing rings
- ▶ avoid artificial nails or nail polish
- ▶ remove watches and jewelry
- ▶ wash wrists and forearms
- ▶ make sure that your sleeves are rolled up and that they do not get wet during washing.

### More information

For more information call Health Connection, 8:30am - 6:00pm, Monday to Friday at 721-7520 or (1-877-721-7520) or visit our website at [www.simcoemuskokahealth.org](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org).

# HANDWASHING IS THE IN THING TO DO.

Call me Beta  
STREPTOCOCCI Group  
A—I'm delighted to give  
you a sore throat.

Hi! I'm  
STAPHYLOCOCCUS.  
How would you like a  
big zit or boil?

I go by the handle of  
KLEBSIELLA. I can  
cause wound infections.

I am CLOSTRIDIUM  
DIFFICILE. I cause  
colitis.

They call me  
HAEMOPHILUS. I can  
cause a highly conta-  
gious conjunctivitis  
(Pinkeye).

I'm TOUGH! The gang  
calls me PSEUDOMONAS  
AERUGINOSA. I infect  
wounds and produce  
blue-green pus.

BOO! I'm E. coli — short  
for ESCHERICHIA coli.  
I cause nice things like  
diarrhea or urinary tract  
infections.

My name is BACILLUS  
SPECIES and I'm a  
normal contaminate.

I'm known as  
INFLUENZA A among  
other things. I love to  
give you pneumonia.

Everybody likes me.  
I cause diarrhea. My  
name is SHIGELLA.

I love people! To show  
you how much—I cause  
urinary tract infections.  
I'm PROTEUS.

You can call me  
BACTEROIDES. If you  
don't wash after a BM  
I can give you many  
things. How would you  
like an ear infection or  
vaginitis?

- Don't spread these germs to others.
  - Wash hands often.
  - Wash after going to the bathroom.
  - Wash before eating.
- Handwashing is the single most important thing to stop spreading infection.



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