

# Myth Busters

**Myth: Soap and water is better than alcohol-based hand rubs.**

Alcohol-based hand rubs significantly reduce the number of microorganisms on skin, are fast acting and cause less skin irritation. For these reasons alcohol-based hand rubs are the preferred method for cleaning your hands unless your hands are visibly soiled.

**Myth: If my hands look clean then I don't need to wash them.**

You can pick up germs from objects, such as door knobs, elevator buttons or hand railings - anything touched by someone else. Some of these germs or viruses cause illnesses such as the flu, colds and diarrhea. When you forget to wash your hands or don't wash them properly, you are spreading germs to other people or to yourself by touching your eyes, nose, mouth or cuts.

**Myth: Alcohol-based hand rubs are drying to the skin.**

Alcohol-based hand rubs have extra ingredients to help rehydrate the skin.

**Myth: I am too busy to clean my hands as often as I should.**

It only takes 20-30 seconds to use alcohol-based hand rubs correctly.

**Myth: If I just stay away from people who have a cold or flu, I won't get sick.**

Sick people spread germs and viruses that cause colds, flu and other illnesses by sneezing and coughing into their hands and touching objects such as stair railings, door knobs and elevator buttons. You can pick these up and get sick if you touch your eyes, mouth or nose.

**Myth: If I use alcohol-based hand rub it means I never have to wash my hands.**

Alcohol-based hand rubs are quick and easy and readily available at Suncreek Village and more accessible than hand washing sinks. While the hand rub kills germs it does not clean the hands. Dirty hands must be washed with soap and water.

**Myth: When my hands are dirty I can just run them under water until they are clean**

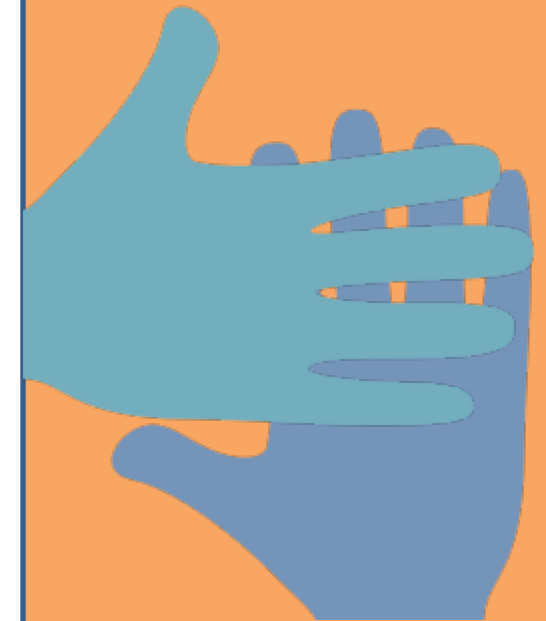
Dirt, germs and viruses get caught up in the natural skin oils. Rinsing in water does not remove the skin oils. You need to use soap. Plus the mechanical action of scrubbing your hands together loosens up the dirt and microorganisms and the soap picks them up and binds to them so the water can wash them away.

This brochure was inspired by an online brochure by Bridgepoint Health [www.bridgepointhealth.ca](http://www.bridgepointhealth.ca)

Illustrations of hand hygiene from WHO.

## Hand Hygiene

*Caring hands are Clean hands*



## Hand Hygiene Technique with Alcohol-Based Formulation

**⌚** Duration of the entire procedure: 20-30 seconds



Apply a palmful of the product in a cupped hand, covering all surfaces;



Rub hands palm to palm;



Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;



Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;



Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;



Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;



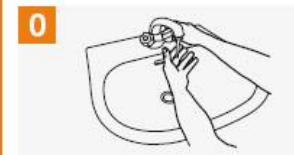
Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;



Once dry, your hands are safe.

## Hand Hygiene Technique with Soap and Water

**⌚** Duration of the entire procedure: 40-60 seconds



Wet hands with water;



Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces;



Rub hands palm to palm;



Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;



Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;



Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;



Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;



Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;



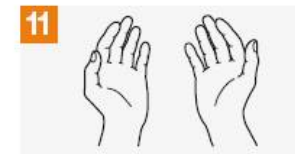
Rinse hands with water;



Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel;



Use towel to turn off faucet;



Your hands are now safe.