HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS
FOR SAFE HEALTHCARE

On average, healthcare providers clean their hands less than half of the times they should. That means you might be leaving yourself and your patients at risk for potentially deadly infections.

FACT:
Healthcare providers might need to clean their hands as many as 100 times per 12-hour shift, depending on the number of patients and intensity of care. Know what it could take to keep your patients safe.

KNOW HOW GERMS SPREAD

Most germs that cause healthcare-associated infections are spread by people's actions. Many potentially deadly germs are spread from patient to patient on the hands of healthcare providers. Consider whether your actions put you or your patients at risk of infection. Clean your hands often to protect yourself and your patients.

PATIENT ZONE:
Clean your hands before and after contact with the patient zone.

ALCOHOL-BASED HAND SANITIZER

The preferred way to clean your hands:

- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer is more effective than soap and water (except during a C. difficile outbreak):
  - It is less damaging to your hands than soap and water.
  - It kills the bad germs that you might pick up on your hands while caring for patients. The good germs quickly grow back on your skin.

TECHNIQUE MATTERS WHEN CLEANING YOUR HANDS

It only counts if you use the right amount, the right way.

- Use enough alcohol-based hand sanitizer to cover all surfaces of your hands.
- You might need more than one pump.
- For alcohol-based hand sanitizer, your hands should stay wet for around 20 seconds if you used the right amount.

GLOVES ARE NOT ENOUGH

Wearing gloves is NOT a substitute for cleaning your hands.

- Your hands can get contaminated while wearing or removing gloves.
- Cleaning your hands after removing your gloves will help prevent the spread of potentially deadly germs.

WHO DO YOUR #CLEAN HANDS COUNT FOR?

www.cdc.gov/HandHygiene

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