

# “It’s OK to Ask”

Everyone caring for you should clean their hands

*International studies have shown that one in twenty patients get an infection during their hospital stay. Good hand hygiene can reduce this number.*

The most common way germs are spread is by people’s hands. Please remember that even if hands look clean, they can carry germs. Hand hygiene is the single most important method of preventing the spread of infection.

**Patients, visitors and staff should clean their hands.**

## When should staff clean their hands?

It is important that all our healthcare staff clean their hands **before** and **after** contact with patients. In order to carry out hand hygiene properly our staff should be “**Bare Below the Elbow**”

- Sleeves rolled up to the elbow
- No watches, jewellery, false nails, nail polish or rings (except a plain band)
- Long hair must be tied up

## When should patients and visitors clean their hands?

- Before eating
- After using the toilet or commode
- Arrival to the hospital and ward
- Before leaving your ward/area



**ZERO HARM**



Working together  
to fight infection...

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### When to use soap and water:

- When your hands look dirty
- After you use the toilet or commode
- Before you eat
- If you have diarrhoea and/or vomiting and if you have *Clostridium difficile*.



### Use alcohol-based hand rub or gel:

- When your hands look clean
- If soap and water are not available



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## How to Clean Your Hands



Duration of the entire procedure: 20-30 seconds

<p><b>1a</b></p> <p>Apply a palmful of the product in a cupped hand, covering all surfaces;</p>	<p><b>1b</b></p> <p>Apply a palmful of the product in a cupped hand, covering all surfaces;</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Rub hands palm to palm;</p>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Right palm over left palm with interlaced fingers and vice versa;</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;</p>
<p><b>6</b></p> <p>Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>Rotational rubbing backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa</p>	<p><b>8</b></p> <p>Once dry, your hands are safe.</p>

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Our staff have all been trained in hand hygiene techniques and won’t be offended if you ask them if they have cleaned their hands.



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## How can I contact a member of the Infection Prevention & Control Team?

Tell the Clinical Nurse Manager or the nurse looking after you if you would like to speak to a member of the Infection Prevention and Control Team and they will contact us.

We have made every possible effort to make sure that all the information provided in this leaflet is true, accurate, complete and up to date at the time of publication.

VERSION 1

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