

Guidance notes 1 (GN1): Hand washing

Hand washing is one of the most important procedures for preventing the spread of infection and the first step in infection control. In addition to hand washing, it is also important to keep fingernails short and clean.

When to wash hands

- Before and after direct contact with each client.
- After contact with any body fluids.
- Before and after using gloves.
- After visiting the toilet.
- Any point when cross contamination occurs.
- Before handling food and drink.

How to wash hands

- Remove jewellery and place hands under warm running water and then apply liquid antibacterial soap.
- Rub hands palm to palm and vigorously to form a lather.
- Rub backs of both hands, then palm to palm with fingers interlaced.
- Rub backs of finger (interlocked).
- Rub all parts of both hands, paying attention to thumbs.
- Rub both palms with fingertips.
- Rinse hands well under warm running water.
- Dry thoroughly with disposable paper towel.
- Nail brushes should not be used unless they are single use disposable ones.
- Cuts and abrasions should be covered with a waterproof plaster and changed as necessary.

For any activities that involve piercing the skin or risk of piercing the skin, alcohol rub should be applied to the hands after washing.

Please do not hesitate to contact our Regulatory Services, should you wish for further advice, or to discuss this matter further.

