

# HEALTH

## Education

### Hand Washing, Are You Doing It Right?

#### WHY?

Hand washing is one of the best ways for you and your family to fight off illness. It is also a helpful way to prevent excess spreading of germs. Having clean hands can stop germs and bacteria from spreading person to person and throughout the entire community: from your home, workplace, hospital, and your fitness center!

#### WHEN?

Help yourself and others by staying healthy and washing your hands often. Hand washing becomes especially important during times, such as flu season, where germs are likely to spread to others. Listed below are important times to keep the hands clean:

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the bathroom
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal food, or animal waste
- After touching garbage
- After using shared equipment in a fitness center

#### HOW?

The Center for Disease Control recommends following these five steps each time you wash your hands:

1. **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
4. **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
5. **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

#### No clean, running water? No soap?

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer is able to reduce the number of germs on the hands, however, it does not completely get rid of the germs.

#### Hand Washing Quick Facts

- Hand washing reduces the number of sick days taken by employees.
- It is estimated that washing hands with soap and water can reduce diarrheal disease-associated deaths by up to 50%.
- Hand washing reduces the number of respiratory illnesses (colds) in the general population by 21%.

#### References:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/features/handwashing/index.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/index.html>



From Corporate Fitness Works Team Leader, Ali Heck