

## Frequently asked questions

### Q. Should I use soap and water or the alcohol based hand solution to clean my hands?

A. You can use either soap or water or an alcohol based hand solution to clean your hands.

### Q. Will I see healthcare workers using the alcohol based solution?

A. Yes, during your visit to hospital you will see healthcare workers frequently washing their hands or using an alcohol based hand solution before and after they attend to you, a relative or a friend. Healthcare workers are trained to use hand hygiene measures to prevent infection.

### Q. Will the hand solution kill all the germs on my hands?

A. The alcohol based solution will kill 99.9 per cent of the germs on your hands.

For further information contact Eastern Health Infection Prevention & Control (IPAC) Service.

Please ask the Nurse Unit Manager for the contact details.

## Protecting Your Privacy

Eastern Health is committed to protecting your privacy. We will keep your personal information secure and disclose information about you only when required by law.

We comply with relevant information and privacy legislation. If you would like more information, please ask a staff member or visit our web site [www.easternhealth.org.au](http://www.easternhealth.org.au)

Eastern Health is accredited by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards.



If you have any English language difficulties, please ask staff to book an interpreter. From home, you can contact us directly by using the Telephone Interpreter Service 13 1450. Interpreter services are provided free of charge. Ask staff to check if this information is available in your preferred language.



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## HAND HYGIENE

### INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS, RELATIVES AND CARERS

## Why do we wash or clean our hands?

**Hand hygiene is the single most important factor in reducing the spread of infections**

Washing hands with soap and water or cleaning hands with alcohol-based solutions remove germs from our hands that may cause disease.

Removing these germs reduces the chance that we will get ill or pass an illness onto other people.

We are encouraging you to join healthcare workers in promoting this important practice by cleaning your hands on entering and after leaving our hospital.

Other opportunities for hand hygiene include:

- When your hands are visibly dirty
- Before you eat or drink
- After going to the toilet
- After using tissues to wipe your nose

**Visitors please clean your hands before visiting and after leaving a patient.**

## How do we wash or clean our hands?

Hands should be washed with soap and water when they are visibly dirty. If your hands are not visibly dirty, if there is no soap and water available or you are unable to get up to wash your hands, alcohol hand rub should be used.

### Washing with soap and water

- Wet hands with warm water
- Apply soap and work into a lather
- Wash all surfaces of your hands for at least 15 seconds
- Rinse thoroughly and dry with paper towel

### How to use alcohol hand rub

- Squirt at least one pump of alcohol hand rub onto your hands
- Rub hands together ensuring that all surfaces of the hands are covered
- Continue to rub all surfaces of the hands until dry

## Hand hygiene should be performed by your healthcare worker at these times:

- **On entering your room** and before starting any personal care, giving medications, feeding or observations
- **Before starting a procedure-** immediately before touching your wound or drain, before giving medications through your intravenous line and prior to inserting any lines or giving any injections
- **After a procedure-** after giving medications through your intravenous line, after touching your wound or drain, after touching your lines, catheters or body fluids
- **When your care is finished** and as they leave the room
- **After touching your surroundings,** including the bed, bedside table, chair or your charts

**Compliance with hand hygiene is important to Eastern Health and you may be asked to complete a short questionnaire following your visit to let us know how we can improve.**

REMEMBER  
You do have a right to ask  
**HAVE YOU WASHED  
YOUR HANDS?**