Hand hygiene is the **single** most effective means of preventing the spread of infection.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

HAND HYGIENE HOW-TOs

Wash

- The CDC recommends washing your hands with soap and warm running water for at least 20 seconds. A good rule of thumb is to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.
- Wet your hands, apply soap and work into lather onto the backs of your hands and between your fingers. Work soap under your nails too, since this is a big place where germs can hide.
- To avoid contaminating yourself with germs on the faucet, be sure to turn off the water using a paper towel when you're finished.

Sanitize

- The CDC recommends using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available. You can also use hand sanitizers to help prevent skin irritation – since they generally contain emollients that moisturize and condition.
- Use enough to thoroughly cover your hands and rub hands together for at least 15 seconds or use an alcohol hand sanitizing wipe to thoroughly clean your hands.
- Don't forget to pay attention to the backs of your hands, wrists, nails and between fingers – killing germs where they hide.

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15 seconds

is all it takes to keep your loved ones safe!

It makes sense that hospitals are the perfect breeding ground for germs. After all, they're filled with sick people and some of them have very serious illnesses. So naturally, the germs that cause infections are everywhere – on bedrails, phones, meal trays, cups, toilets, elevator buttons and many other surfaces.

Practicing good hand hygiene not only helps reduce healthcare-associated infections, but excess healthcare costs. For example, one study found that the average incremental direct cost for patients with a hospital-acquired infection was $8.832.*

*1.6 Million Admission Analysis, MedMined, Inc. September 2006

So how are these germs spread? Very often, by hands. In fact, every time you touch an object germs go along for the ride. Fortunately, there's a lot we can do to stop germs dead in their tracks and help prevent the spread of infection.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that **one-third** of all healthcare-associated infections can be prevented through better infection control programs. And proper hand hygiene was defined as the single most important means of preventing the spread of germs that cause infection[1].

Washing or sanitizing your hands is the **most important** thing you can do to prevent spreading germs.

Better infection control really is in our hands.

Two easy ways to get a handle on germ control:

1. **Always wash your hands or use an alcohol-based sanitizer or alcohol wipes** after you cough, sneeze or blow your nose – or after using the toilet or touching food trays, medicine containers, cups and other frequently used objects in your room. Also, try not to rub your eyes or put your fingers near your nose or mouth, since germs typically enter your body through these areas.
2. **As soon as visitors enter your room, remind them to wash or sanitize their hands.** Don't worry that they'll get mad. Your family and friends have your best interests in mind, so they'll be glad to do it. Also, don't hesitate to remind hospital personnel too – including doctors, nurses, medical techs, housekeeping and food servers. Our staff works hard to prevent infections, so they expect you to ask them if they've washed or sanitized their hands.

Hand sanitizers anytime, anywhere.

Soap and water washing is a great way to keep hands clean and prevent the spread of germs. Our hospital also relies on alcohol-based hand sanitizers – systems that do not require water – recommended by the CDC as an effective way to help prevent the spread of germs in hospitals, offices, schools, childcare centers and other public places.

These hand sanitizers aren't just made available to our staff – we also provide them to you and your visitors. You'll find numerous touch-free dispensers throughout our hospital, as well as amenity wipes on your meal trays and small sanitizer bottles in your patient admission kit.

PURELL® Instant Hand Sanitizer:

The brand we trust to kill 99.99% of most common germs.

We trust PURELL – *America's #1 brand of hand sanitizer* – because it:

- Quickly sanitizes hands
- Kills 99.99% of most common germs that may cause illness
- Works in as little as 15 seconds
- Leaves no stickiness or residue on hands, and is gentle on skin

1. The impact of alcohol hand sanitizers use on infection rates in an extended care facility. Fendler EJ, Ali Y, Hammond BS. *Am J Infect. Control* 2002;30:226-33.