

Preventing Skin Irritation

- Wet hands before adding soap!
- Use warm water instead of hot water
- Use only a small amount of soap
- Use a mild soap when possible
- When hands are not visibly soiled use alcohol hand sanitizer
- Cover and protect your hands at home
- Apply a quality lotion after hand washing, and at the first sign of drying

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Protecting Your Hands

Workplace Health
& Safety



Protecting Your Hands

Why is Hand Care Important?

It is very important to have healthy hands with intact skin that is free of irritation at all times. This is a safety issue for both you and our patients.

Frequent hand washing can cause your hands to become dry, cracked and itchy. You may experience swelling, burning and dark patches. It is important you to watch for these signs on your hands. If you have broken skin on your hands you will need to visit Workplace Health & Safety to create a hand care plan with the Occupational Health nurse.

When to Use Hand Lotion

- **At the start of the work day.** Using hand lotion will provide a protective barrier.
- **Shortly after washing your hands.** Your skin will absorb some water during hand washing. By applying lotion when your hands are still slightly damp, the lotion will help hold that moisture in your skin. Frequent re-application of lotion will help maintain that protective layer.
- **Before going on breaks.** The longer you have lotion on your hands, the more water will be retained in your skin.

- **Before you leave work.** After washing your hands for the last time on your shift, take extra time to allow the warm water to be in contact with your skin, pat your hands dry and then follow it with an application of a hand lotion.



Hand Care Instructions

- At work, use hospital approved Alcohol-based hand rub to clean your hands when they are not visibly soiled.
- When washing hands, use lukewarm water and unscented irritant-free soap or hand cleanser.
- Remove rings when cleaning your hands as the cleaning product can be caught under rings, which can cause irritation to your skin.
- Rinse hands thoroughly and pat your hands dry.

- Protective gloves should be intact and clean and dry inside. Hands must be clean and dry when donning gloves.
- Apply fragrance-free, non-irritating moisturizing lotion to hands frequently.
- Avoid skin contact with detergents, strong cleaning agents, shampoos, various waxes and polishes, solvents and thinners.
- Do not apply hair lotion, cream, gels or dyes with bare hands.
- Continue hand protection for all gardening, cooking, cleaning, bathing and childcare duties at home.
- Protect your hands from the dry cold. Wear mitts or gloves at all times when in the cold.
- Moisturize your hands as much as possible.

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