



# News

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Connecticut Department of Public Health

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## DPH Reminds Public about the Health Benefits of Handwashing

**Hartford** – In conjunction with “Global Handwashing Day,” October 15, 2015, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) is reminding people of the importance of hand washing to stay healthy.

“Keeping our hands clean is one of the best things we can do to keep from getting sick and avoid spreading germs to others,” said Dr. Richard Melchreit, the DPH Healthcare Associated Infections Coordinator. “Good handwashing at school and home can help whole communities stay healthy. It’s quick and simple and can keep us all from getting sick.”

Many infections, such as the flu, can be spread by not washing hands. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol to clean hands.

Whether you are at home, at work, traveling, or already sick, find out how good hand hygiene can protect you, your family, and others.

### ***When should you wash your hands?***

- 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 toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing

### ***How should you wash your hands?***

- Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- 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.

- Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
- Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
- Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

***What should you do if you don't have soap and clean, running water?***

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to reduce the number of germs on them in most situations. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. Hand sanitizers are not as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.

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