

**HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES**

HAND HYGIENE

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Effective Date: 9/2012

Policy #: IC001

Cross Referenced: CDC-Guidelines for Hand Hygiene

Origin: Infection Prevention

Reviewed Date: 2/2012, 2/2015

Authority: Adm Dir, Quality & Safety

Revised Date: 8/2012

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SCOPE:

All employees, contracted workers, volunteers and students of Hackettstown Regional Medical Center (HRMC)

PURPOSE

- To reduce the number of resident organisms and remove dirt, organic material and transient microorganisms from hands.
- To prevent the spread of infection.
- To promote hand hygiene as an organizational priority.

DEFINITIONS

Alcohol-Based Hand Rub: A solution that contains 60-95% alcohol and is designed to be applied to hands to reduce the number of viable organisms on the hands.

Antimicrobial Soap: soap that contains an antiseptic agent. Antiseptic agents are antimicrobial substances that are applied to the skin to reduce the number of microbial flora. Examples include alcohols, chlorhexidine, chlorine, hexachlorophene, iodine, chloroxylenol, Quaternary ammonium compounds, and triclosan.

Antiseptic Hand Wash: Washing hands with water and soap containing an antiseptic agent.

Antiseptic Hand Rub: Applying an antiseptic hand rub product to all surfaces of the hands to reduce the number of microorganisms present without rinsing with water.

Persistent Activity: Prolonged or extended antimicrobial activity, usually measured in hours, which prevents or inhibits the regrowth of microorganisms after application of the product.

Subungual: Under the nail (eg, fingernail)

Visibly Soiled Hands: Hands that show visible dirt or that are visibly contaminated with proteinaceous material, blood, or other body fluid.

POLICY

- I. Specific hand washing agents shall be available to reduce the transfer of disease producing organisms from person to person. Liquid soaps including antimicrobial soaps shall be available at all general public patient care areas. Antimicrobial skin cleansers/ alcohol-based hand rubs shall be available in all patient care areas, surgical procedure areas, and obstetrical areas. All hand washing agents must be readily available and approved by the infection Prevention and Control Committee.

- II. Healthcare workers are required to practice proper hand hygiene procedures as outlined. **THE POLICY INCORPORATES THE PHILOSOPHY OF “CLEAN IN AND CLEAN OUT” FOR EVERY PATIENT ENCOUNTER.**

EQUIPMENT

Running water, liquid soap, antimicrobial skin cleanser, alcohol based hand rubs, paper towels or air dryer.

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PROCEDURE:

I. HANDWASHING AND HAND ANTISEPSIS:

A. INDICATIONS:

1. If hands are visibly soiled or contaminated with blood or body fluid, use liquid soap and water:
 - Before eating
 - After using restroom
 - When caring for a patient with spore forming bacteria, C difficile patients or patients with Norovirus.
2. If hands are NOT visibly soiled, use an alcohol-based hand rub or use antimicrobial soap and water for routinely decontaminating hands for the following clinical situations:
 - On entering and exiting the patient room or area.
 - Before and after having direct or indirect contact with patients including but not limited to:
 - Before donning sterile gloves when inserting a central intravascular catheter.
 - Before inserting indwelling urinary catheters, peripheral vascular catheters or other invasive devices that do not require a surgical procedure.
 - Decontaminate hands after contact with a patients intact skin (e.g. when taking a patients blood pressure, lifting a patient).
 - After contact with blood or body fluids, mucous membranes, in intact skin and wound dressings if hands are not visibly soiled.
 - When moving from a contaminated body site to a clean body site during patient care
 - Before donning gloves
 - After removing gloves

B. PROCEDURE:

1. Hand hygiene technique with soap and water

- Wet hands with water
- Apply product and thoroughly distribute over hands for at least 15 seconds, covering all surfaces of the hands and fingers.
- Rinse hands with water and dry thoroughly with a disposable towel or warm air dryer.
- Use paper towel to turn off faucet.
- Avoid the use of very hot water, because repeated exposure to hot water may increase risk of dermatitis.

2. Hand hygiene with waterless alcohol based hand cleansing technique

- Apply appropriate amount of product to palm of one hand and rub hands together, covering all surfaces of hands and fingers, until hands are dry.

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II. SURGICAL HAND ANTISEPSIS

1. A surgical hand scrub should be performed by health care personnel before donning sterile gloves for surgical or other invasive procedures. Use of either an antimicrobial surgical scrub agent intended for surgical hand antisepsis or an alcohol-based antiseptic surgical hand rub with documented persistent and cumulative activity that has met US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulatory requirements for surgical hand antisepsis is acceptable.
2. **A standardized surgical hand scrub procedure using an alcohol-based surgical hand rub:**
 - a. Remove jewelry including rings, watches, and bracelets.
 - b. Don a surgical mask. If others are at the scrub sink, a surgical mask should be worn in the presence of hand scrub activity.
 - c. If visibly soiled, prewash hands and forearms with plain soap and water or antimicrobial agent.
 - d. Clean the subungual areas of both hands under running water using a disposable nail cleaner.
 - e. Rinse hands and forearms under running water.
 - f. Dry hands and forearms thoroughly with a disposable paper towel.
 - g. Dispense the manufacturer-recommended amount of the surgical hand rub product.
 - h. Apply the product to the hands and forearms according to the manufacturer's written instructions.
 - i. Repeat the product application process as directed.
 - j. Rub thoroughly until completely dry.
 - k. In the OR or other invasive procedure room, don a sterile surgical gown and gloves.
3. **A traditional, standardized, surgical hand scrub procedure:**
 - a. Remove jewelry including rings, watches, and bracelets.
 - b. Don a surgical mask. If others are at the scrub sink, a surgical mask should be worn in the presence of hand scrub activity.
 - c. Wash hands and forearms if visibly soiled with soap and running water immediately before beginning the surgical scrub.
 - d. Clean the subungual areas of both hands under running water using a disposable nail cleaner.
 - e. Rinse hands and forearms under running water.

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- f. Dispense the approved antimicrobial scrub agent according to the manufacturer's written directions.
- g. Apply the antimicrobial agent to wet hands and forearms using a soft, non-abrasive sponge.
- h. A three- or five-minute scrub should be timed to allow adequate product contact with skin, according to the manufacturer's written directions.
- i. Visualize each finger, hand, and arm as having four sides. Wash all four sides effectively, keeping the hand elevated. Repeat this process for opposite fingers, hand, and arm.
- j. Avoid splashing surgical attire.
- k. Discard sponges, if used, in appropriate containers.
- l. Hands and arms should be rinsed under running water in one direction from fingertips to elbows as often as needed.
- m. Hold hands higher than elbows and away from surgical attire.
- n. In the OR, dry hands and arms with a sterile towel before donning a sterile surgical gown and gloves.

III. OTHER ASPECTS OF HAND HYGIENE:

- A. Artificial fingernails, extenders or coverings, including but not limited to: wraps, gels, shellac, are NOT allowed for healthcare workers who have direct physical contact with patients including patient devices and patient supplies for example: environmental services, central services, dietary personnel.
- B. Direct patient care providers nails must be kept short (less than ¼ inch long)
- C. All employees are encouraged to:
 - Keep fingernails short (less than ¼ inch long and well manicured).
 - Keep nail polish, if worn at all, free from chips or cracks.
- D. Wear gloves when in contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials, mucous membranes and non-intact skin could occur.

IV. SKIN CARE:

- A. Use hand lotions to minimize the occurrence of irritant contact dermatitis associated with hand antisepsis or washing. Hand lotions must be either in a squeeze or pump bottles. Jars which allow fingers to dip into the product are easily contaminated and are not allowed.

REFERENCES

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