

HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
Administrative Policy and Procedure

SECTION: PATIENT CARE SERVICES

Number: PC17
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TITLE: HAND HYGIENE

PURPOSE

To outline the expectation and process for hand hygiene at Hackettstown Regional Medical Center.

SCOPE

All employees, physicians and volunteers.

SUPPORTING DATA

Hand washing is the single most important procedure for preventing transmission of infections. In contact with body secretions, hands can carry bacteria, viruses, and fungi that may be potentially infectious. The purpose of hand washing is to remove dirt, organic material and transient microorganisms.

POLICY

For general patient care, a plain, non-antimicrobial soap is recommended. Gloves should be used as an adjunct to, not as a substitute for hand washing. Hands should be washed each time gloves are removed.

PROCEDURE

1. Hand Washing
 - a. Washing hands is performed promptly and as thoroughly as possible
 - b. Between patient contacts and after contact with blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, and equipment or articles contaminated by them.
 - c. For general patient care, a plain, non-antimicrobial soap is recommended.
 - d. Gloves should be used as an adjunct to, not a substitute for hand washing.
 - e. Remove gloves and jewelry before handwashing.
 - f. Turn on the water and adjust to comfortably warm.
 - g. Wet hands with running water.
 - h. Apply 3-5 ml. of soap and distribute over hands.

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- i. Rub hands together vigorously for at least 15 seconds, covering all surfaces of the hands and fingers.
- j. Rinse hands under running water to remove soap residue
- k. Dry hands with a disposable towel.
- l. Use disposable towel to shut off the faucet.
- m. Dispose of towel in the trash receptacle.

2. Hand Hygiene: Alcohol Based Hand Sanitizers

- a. Proper use of an alcohol based hand sanitizer requires using a small amount of the product and rubbing it in, making sure to disperse it between the fingers and over the entire hand: front and back.
- b. Alcohol based hand sanitizers may be used when it is not possible to wash hands properly AND when hands are NOT visibly soiled.
- c. Alcohol based hand sanitizers may be used 5-6 times before hand washing is required as long as hands aren't visibly dirty or contaminated with proteinaceous materials.
- d. Appropriate alcohol based hand sanitizers may be a gel, foam, or rinse form.
- e. The concentration of the alcohol in the hand sanitizer must be between 60 and 95%.
- f. Alcohol based hand sanitizers are not effective against bacterial spores (EX: C. difficile), protozoan oocysts, and certain viruses.

3. Artificial Fingernails

Fingernails should be clean, neatly manicured, and an appropriate business length for employees in all departments of the hospital. Consistent with National Patient Safety and Infection Control Standards, the hospital prohibits artificial fingernails or extenders to be worn by staff who provide direct patient care, directly supervise patient care or have contact with patient care supplies, medications, equipment or food. "Artificial fingernails are defined as any material applied to the nail for the purpose of strengthening or lengthening nails, including but not limited to, silk wrap, acrylic overlays, tips, extenders, gels or tapes.

REFERENCES

CDC Guideline for Hand Hygiene in Health-Care Settings; 2002: APIC Hand Hygiene. Guidelines 1995.

Infection Control and Applied Epidemiology, Principles and Practice, APIC,1996.

Administrative Policy AD49; Appearance Code Policy

Joint Commission National Patient Safety Goal 7A