

HAND WASHING BASICS

Script for in-service

1. Hand Washing
 - a. Breaks the chain of infection transmission. Appropriate hand washing minimizes microorganisms acquired by contact with infected surfaces.
 - b. Healthcare workers and patients must practice effective hand washing
 - c. Compliance with hand washing is frequently sub-optimal:
 - i. Lack of equipment
 - ii. Low staffing ratios
 - iii. Allergies to hand washing products
 - iv. Insufficient knowledge about risks posed by not washing hands
 - v. Time required
 - vi. Casual attitude by staff towards hand washing
2. Dangers of not washing your hands
 - a. Germ accumulation on hands
 - b. Transmitted by touching to self and patients
3. Cause and effect
 - a. Health care workers and patients are exposed to many micro-organisms during the day
 - b. Risk increased when health care workers and patients wear artificial finger nails
 - i. Chipped nail polish supports the growth of larger numbers of organisms on fingernails
 - ii. Individuals with artificial nails harbor more organisms on fingertips before and after hand washing
4. Contact transmission
 - a. Touch is the most common mode of transmission
 - b. Washing hands breaks this cycle of staff -> patient -> family -> staff
5. Prevention and Notes
 - a. Minimally wash hands and wrists for 10 to 15 seconds with soap and water
 - b. Alcohol hand rubs are appropriate for rapid hand cleaning in between patients but are not a substitute for washing hands, especially if heavily soiled.
 - c. Alcohol hand rubs must contain 65 to 70% alcohol to be effective
6. Soaps
 - a. Regular or anti microbial work well
 - b. If bar soaps sit in a pool of water they can grow pseudomonas
 - c. When a dispenser of liquid soap is empty it must be thrown out and not refilled
7. Hand washing
 - a. Requires running water
 - b. Utilization of soap or waterless cleaner
 - c. Disposable paper towels: common towels facilitate transmission of infection

8. When to wash hands
9. How to wash hands
10. Steps in proper hand washing
11. Notes to remember
12. Problems