

Hand Washing – The Principles of Why

The best control for stopping the spread of COVID 19 via human touch transmission is frequent, effective hand washing.

Hand washing removes any contaminants from your hands that you may have picked up from touching surfaces or items. This in turn stops you spreading anything on your hands to further items you touch. This includes COVID 19.

An effective hand wash acts as an end to transfer of contamination from that point until additional surfaces/items are handled.

Would it be better to wear gloves?

The same principles of human touch transmission apply to individuals wearing gloves. Any contaminants picked up from items you touch whilst wearing gloves will be transferred to additional items/surfaces you touch. The only way to break the chain is to change your gloves.

Care at this point must be taken not to touch the outside of the gloves as this will pass contaminants to your hands. So, after removing gloves hand washing is strongly advised.

Gloves are advised for activities where contaminants or substances have the potential to cause harm to the skin. COVID 19 does not do this. The Workshop environment is a good example of this

Gloves create a barrier between harmful substances and the skin, but do not stop the transfer of contaminants from one item to another

So which method is the most effective for minimising COVID 19 transmission?

For both methods its vitally important to minimise/stop touching your face or mouth. This can promote contaminants on either bare hands or gloved hands to enter the body.

Both achieve the control of stopping the spread of contaminants. Both have weaknesses:

Hand Washing: If not done properly or frequently, transmission rates of contaminants is increased. In addition, having open cuts or abrasions on the hands leaves the person exposed

Gloves: Not frequently changing gloves defeats the principle of not spreading contaminants. Changing gloves is also a challenge without touching the contaminated surfaces. Wearing the same gloves for an extended period of time is bad practice from an infection control perspective and MUST be avoided.

The question becomes; is it easier to wash your hands frequently or change gloves frequently? As there is typically the requirement to wash you hands after changing gloves regular hand washing becomes the most effective, practical measure

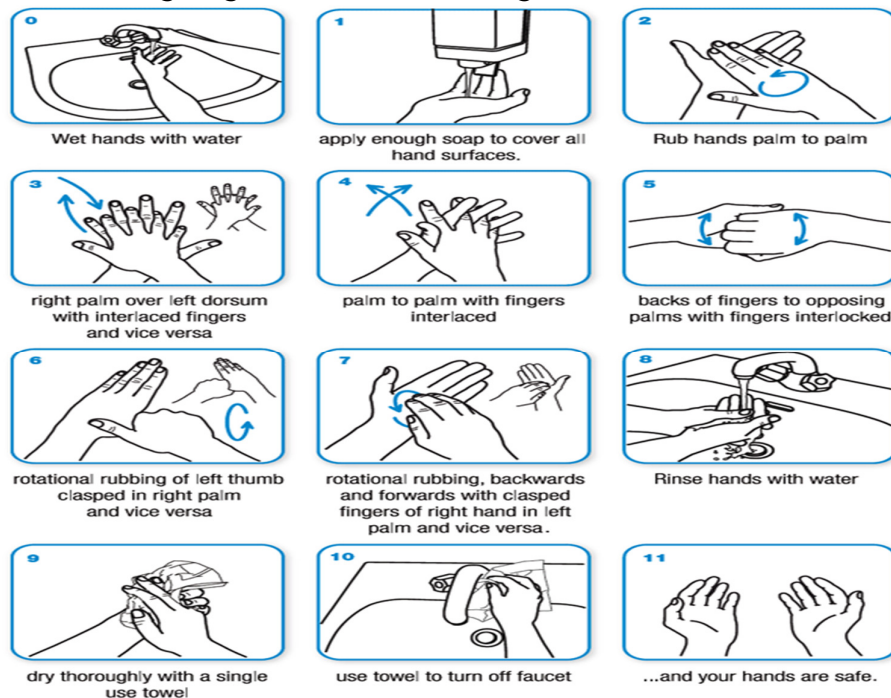
Hand Washing Practices

Hand washing is an essential step in helping prevent the spread of infection and disease. Regular hand washing with liquid soap will catch, dissolve and kill the bacteria at its source and prevent it from lingering on items that will be in regular contact with team members/customers such as pens, paperwork and doors.

There are numerous times throughout the day when you would be expected to wash your hands before performing another task:

- Handling stationary/paperwork
- Making food or beverages
- Sneezing/coughing
- Touching surfaces multiple people have or will come into contact with
- Using phones/computers
- Manoeuvring vehicles/handling keys
- Waste disposal

Washing your hands more often with liquid soap and hot water for **at least 20 seconds** will be the initial and most useful preventative measure against infection. You can also use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser as an additional or alternative method of washing. A guide to hand washing is laid out below:



Further information can be found on the below link to the NHS website along with a video guide. <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>

Pendragon also have information regarding this on the Velocity website: <https://pendragonuk.sharepoint.com/>