

MASTERING THE ART OF HANDWASHING

A step-by-step guide for adults and children

In the fast-paced world we live in, one simple but important habit is often overlooked — handwashing. The COVID-19 pandemic taught us that proper hand hygiene is a cornerstone in maintaining good health, preventing the spread of infections, and fostering a clean and vibrant lifestyle.

Additionally, amidst global health concerns, there is a growing awareness of the importance of hand hygiene. Health organisations and authorities worldwide are emphasising the role of handwashing to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases. So, let us walk you through the step-by-step process of handwashing to help you develop this essential life skill.

Begin the handwashing ritual by turning on the tap and letting the water flow over your hands. Ensure that your hands are thoroughly wet, as this helps to activate the soap and begin the cleaning process.

Choose a soap that suits your skin type and is effective in removing germs. Apply a generous amount to your palms and

between your fingers. Do not forget to include the back of your hands and under your nails. The friction created during this step is crucial for eliminating bacteria and viruses.

The recommended duration for scrubbing is at least 20 seconds. This is approximately the time it takes to hum the “Happy Birthday” song twice! Ensure that you cover all surfaces of your hands, paying special attention to the fingertips and nails.

You may ask, why wash for 20 seconds? According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the US, washing our hands for about 15-30 seconds removes more germs from our hands than washing for shorter periods.

Once you have diligently scrubbed your hands, rinse them under running water. Make sure to remove all traces of soap, as leftover soap can cause irritation.

Whether you are using a hand dryer or a paper towel, ensure your hands are thoroughly dry. Damp hands are more likely to pick up and spread germs, defeating the



purpose of handwashing.

We understand it can be challenging to encourage children to wash their hands but you can turn it into a fun and educational activity. Consider using colourful, child-friendly soaps, and engage them with a playful song or a countdown to make the process enjoyable — like the Happy Birthday song!

As adults, we can integrate handwashing into our daily routines by making it a habit to wash our hands, for example – before and after preparing food, before eating, after using the restroom, after touching surfaces in public places as well as after sneezing or coughing.

Also, staying informed about current trends in hand hygiene can ensure that we are equipped with the latest information to

protect ourselves, our loved ones, as well as our communities.

The practice of thorough handwashing is not just a personal choice but a societal responsibility. By adopting this simple habit, we can contribute to the well-being of the community by preventing the spread of illnesses.

Regularly washing our hands is a small yet powerful step towards a healthier lifestyle. By following this step-by-step guide, both adults and children can contribute to creating a cleaner and safer environment for everyone.

So, let's lather up, scrub down, and embrace the positive impact that this simple habit can have on our lives.

By Ayman Anika



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