

ATTACHMENT 1: HAND HYGIENE OVERVIEW

Methods	Definition	Area	Duration (minimum)
Routine handwash	Washing hands with plain (i.e., non-antimicrobial) soap and water.	Fingertips to the wrist	15 seconds ¹
Routine hand antiseptics		Fingertips to the wrist at a minimum	
<i>Antiseptic handwash</i>	Washing hands with water and soap or other detergents containing an antiseptic agent (e.g., chlorhexidine, iodine and iodophors, chloroxylenol [PCMX], triclosan).		15 seconds ¹
<i>Antiseptic hand rub</i>	Applying an antiseptic hand-rub (i.e., alcohol-based hand rub ²) product to all surfaces of the hands to reduce the number of microorganisms present.		Rub hands until the agent is dry ²
Surgical hand antiseptics	Antiseptic handwash or antiseptic hand rub performed preoperatively by surgical personnel to eliminate transient and reduce resident hand flora. Antiseptic detergent preparations often have persistent antimicrobial activity.	Hands and forearms ³	2–6 minutes with water and antimicrobial agent/detergent Follow manufacturer instructions for an alcohol-based surgical hand-scrub product with persistent activity. ⁴

¹ For most procedures, a vigorous, brief (at least 15 seconds) rubbing together of all surfaces of pre-moistened lathered hands and fingers followed by rinsing under a stream of cool or tepid water is recommended. Hands should always be dried thoroughly before donning gloves.

² Preparations containing 60-95% alcohol. Alcohol-based hand rubs should not be used in the presence of visible soil or organic material. If using an alcohol-based hand rub, apply adequate amount to palm of one hand and rub hands together, covering all surfaces of the hands and fingers, until hands are dry. Follow manufacturer's recommendations regarding the volume of product to use. If hands feel dry after rubbing hands together for 10–15 seconds, an insufficient volume of product likely was applied.

³ Removal of all jewelry, vigorous rubbing together of all surfaces of premoistened lathered hands and forearms. Recent studies have shown neither brushes or sponges are necessary to reduce bacterial counts on the hands of surgical personnel to acceptable levels.

⁴ Before applying the alcohol solution, pre-wash hands and forearms with water and a non-antimicrobial soap and dry arms and forearms completely. After application of the alcohol-based product as recommended, allow hands and forearms to dry thoroughly and immediately don sterile gloves