

	<b>Montana Mental Health Nursing Care Center Policy Manual</b>	<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>1502</b>
		<b>Original Date</b>	<b>12/23/1996</b>
	<b>Department: Exposure Control Plan</b>	<b>Revised Date</b>	<b>03/01/2016</b>
<b>Hand Hygiene</b>			

**POLICY:**

All employees shall wash hands and any other skin with soap and water and flush exposed mucous membranes with water immediately or as soon as feasible following contact of such body areas with blood or other potentially infectious materials.

**Hand Hygiene**

1. During the delivery of healthcare, avoid unnecessary touching of surfaces in close proximity to the patient to prevent both contamination of clean hands from environmental surfaces and transmission of pathogens from contaminated hands to surfaces.
2. When hands are visibly dirty, contaminated with proteinaceous material, or visibly soiled with blood or body fluids, wash hands with either a non-antimicrobial soap and water or an anti-microbial soap and water.
3. If hands are not visibly soiled, or after removing visible material with non-antimicrobial soap and water, decontaminate hands in the clinical situations described below (Perform Hand Hygiene Steps #1-6). The preferred method of hand decontamination is with an alcohol-based hand rub. Alternatively, hands may be washed with an anti-microbial soap and water. Frequent use of alcohol-based hand rub immediately following hand washing with non-antimicrobial soap may increase the frequency of dermatitis.
4. Do not wear artificial fingernails or extenders when providing patient care in any clinical area or when preparing or serving food.

Hand washing facilities are readily available to all employees.

Unscented hand sanitizer may be used in cases where hands are not visibly soiled.

**Hand Hygiene****Perform Hand Hygiene**

1. Before having direct contact with patients.
2. After contact with blood, body fluids or excretions, mucous membranes, non-intact skin, or wound dressings.
3. After contact with a patient's intact skin (when taking a pulse or blood pressure or lifting a patient).
4. If hands will be moving from a contaminated-body site to a clean-body site during patient care.
5. After contact with inanimate objects (including medical equipment) in the immediate vicinity of the patient.
6. After removing gloves.
7. Wash hands with non-antimicrobial soap and water or with antimicrobial soap and water if contact with spores (i.e. *C difficile* or *Bacillus anthracis*) is likely to have occurred. The physical action of washing and rinsing hands under such circumstances is recommended because alcohols, chlorhexidine, iodophors, and other antiseptic agents have poor activity against spores.

Employees shall advise supervisors or managers directly of any locations where contamination could reasonably be expected to occur and hands cannot be cleaned in accordance with the following standards so that corrective action can be taken.

Inability to clean hands in accordance with following standard prior to possible contamination of self or others which could result in transmitting a blood borne disease shall be reported and evaluated as a possible exposure incident.

<b>Hand Hygiene</b>
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**PROCEDURE:**

Hand hygiene is the single most important means of preventing the spread of infections. The principle of good hand washing is that of using friction to mechanically remove micro-organisms. The principle of using hand sanitizer is to kill most of the micro-organisms.

**1. Hand Washing**

- A. Wash hands with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds.
- B. Rinse hands under running water with fingers pointing downward.
- C. Dry hands with paper towels. Use a new clean paper towel to turn off faucet and dispose of towel in waste receptacle.
- D. Apply hand lotion after frequent hand washing. Use lotion to prevent skin irritation, breakdown and subsequent infection.

**2. Hand Sanitizer (when hands are not visibly soiled)**

- A. Place enough foam or gel in the palm of the hand to thoroughly cover hands and fingers.
- B. Rub hands together briskly for at least 20 seconds or until sanitizer is dry, whichever is greater.