What is Hand Hygiene?

**Who?**

Hand hygiene is for everyone during our everyday activities at work and play.

- Hand sanitizer or alcohol based hand rub (ABHR)

**What?**

There are two ways to do effective hand hygiene

- Handwashing

To effectively wash your hands you will need to:
  - use soap and water
  - make a lather
  - ensure all areas of your hands are scrubbed for 20 seconds
  - rinse thoroughly and dry

- Hand sanitizer (ABHR)

Hand sanitizer (ABHR) should be at least 60% alcohol to be effective and applied to all areas of the hands and wrist and left to dry

**When?**

Hand Hygiene should be performed:

- Before and after eating
- After using the restroom
- After coughing or blowing your nose
- After playing outdoors or with animals
- When your hands look dirty

**Where?**

Hand hygiene can happen anywhere as long as you have access to the tools you need to get the job done.

**Why?**

Hand hygiene is one of the most important tasks we can do to avoid getting sick and spreading germs that can make other people sick.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

- Is washing your hands better than using sanitizer?
  - In the general public, washing with soap and water is preferred. However, if soap and water is not available, ABHR is a great substitute. In the healthcare setting ABHR is preferred in most cases.

- Is antibacterial soap better than regular soap?
  - With proper use, all soaps are equally effective at removing germs.

**How can I learn more?**

The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) has many resources and materials about Hand Hygiene. For general information visit this website:

https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html