

Dec. 4-10 is Hand Washing Awareness Week

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Has anyone ever told you that you'll catch a cold if you go out into the cold without a coat? Well, that's a myth. The main way cold and flu viruses spread is by hand-to-mouth contact, coughing or sneezing. Frequent hand washing is the single most effective method of preventing the spread of bacteria and viruses that can cause infections and food borne illnesses. Your desk is also a breeding ground for germs. Clean your desktop and the items on it with disinfectant at least 2 or 3 times a week.



When to Wash Hands:

- Before and after preparing food, especially when switching between raw and ready-to-eat foods
- Before and after eating and drinking
- After coughing, sneezing, using a tissue, or smoking
- After touching your eyes, lips, mouth or skin with your hands
- After using shared office or exercise equipment like phones, computers, treadmills, free weights, etc.
- After you shake hands with someone, especially if you know they are sick
- After handling animals
- After using a restroom or changing a baby's diaper

Hands should be washed with warm water and soap to work up a lather and rubbed together for at least 20 seconds: make sure to wash palms, back of hands, between fingers, and forearms. Rinse hands in warm water and dry with single-use paper towel. Turn off faucet and open bathroom door handles with paper towels to avoid re-contamination of hands.

Source: *U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

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