

# health awareness



A COUNTY HEALTH POOL PUBLICATION

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## HAND HYGIENE

**W**hat would happen if we were really diligent about washing our hands? Besides needing a lot of hand lotion, we'd probably get sick less often, spread fewer germs to others...and we'd get really good at singing the "Happy Birthday" song. (This will make sense later!)

### **When to wash your hands**

- Before, during and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the restroom
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage

### **How to wash your hands**

Five simple and effective steps (Wet, Lather, Scrub, Rinse, Dry)

- Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end two times.
- Rinse your hands under

clean, running water.

- Dry hands using a clean towel, or let them air dry.

### **Handwashing in the workplace**

In 2002 a University of Arizona study found that the workplace is crawling with germs: Phones have up to 52,127 germs per square inch, keyboards 3,925 per square inch and computer mice 1,676 per square inch. With statistics like these, it's no wonder the American Cleaning Institute brainstormed the following tips for employees to stay healthy at work.

When to wash:

- Each time you use the restroom
- Before and after staff meetings if food is served
- After scanning newspapers or magazines in the breakroom

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- Before and after lunch
- Before and after using a coworker's keyboard, office supplies, shared office equipment, etc.
- Before and after a work meet and greet activity

### **The science**

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps you can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Many diseases and conditions are spread by not washing hands with soap and clean, running water. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends cleaning hands in a specific way to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. The guidance for effective handwashing and use of hand sanitizer was developed based on data from a number of studies.

### **What might be hanging out on your hands?**

Microbes are tiny living organisms – some cause disease while others are harmless. Germs, or pathogens, are types of microbes that may cause disease.

### **Facts**

Eighty percent of all infectious diseases are transmitted by touch. Soap may not kill all viruses; handwashing using the five steps included in this article will decrease the viral counts to a point below the infectious threshold. In a survey, 95% of people said they wash their hands after using a public restroom. However, when 8,000 people were monitored in public restrooms across five large U.S. cities, the actual number of

handwashers was closer to 67%. If you don't get your annual flu shot through the CHP's flu shot reimbursement, consider this: Washing your hands consistently - as outlined in this article - might be the #1 prevention tip to keep you from getting the flu.

### **Where's the dirt?**

The most frequently missed parts when handwashing are the nailbeds of fingers, the third and fourth fingertips, the area in between fingers and the en-

tire front side of the thumb. Be thorough and sudse up all parts of your hands.

### **Could Yankee Doodle Dandy save your life?**

Tired of the "Happy Birthday" song? Try "Yankee Doodle" instead. If you'd prefer to count, the CDC recommends at least 20 seconds. However, studies show that the reduction of skin bacteria is nearly 10 times greater by washing with soap for 30 seconds. No soap and water? Use hand sanitizer instead!

### **Updates!**

Two updated CHP claim forms are now available online at [www.ctsi.org](http://www.ctsi.org). Under Pools, click CHP, and the blue link to get to Forms & Documents. Use the updated CHP Health Fair Claim Form with new place of service code 99 and location code TIN 742452969. The old form with place of service code 22 will be denied by Anthem. Reminder: You and your dependents age 19+ (up to age 26 for eligible dependent children) who are enrolled in a CHP medical plan are eligible for a \$40 health fair reimbursement annually. Submit the updated Health Fair Claim Form and a copy of your receipt to your Entity Contact, your Pool Benefits Administrator or to Anthem.

The CDL Physical Claim Form has also been updated. Two codes are now listed: ICD-9 (old) and ICD-10 (new). Reminder: If you are required to have a CDL for your job and are enrolled in a CHP medical plan, you are eligible for the CHP CDL Department of Transportation Physical reimbursement. Receive up to \$180 reimbursement every 24 months. Submit the completed CDL Physical Claim Form, provider invoice/statement (HICFA) and, if you paid up front, a copy of your receipt. You or your provider must manually submit the forms to Anthem or your CHP Benefits Administrator.

### **Extra! Extra!**

CHP is pleased to announce a CDL Physical enhancement beginning this year. Members with specific medical conditions who are required by CDOT to have the CDL physical more frequently than every 24 months in order to retain their CDL will also be reimbursed by the Pool.

Reminder: <https://nationalregistry.fmcsa.dot.gov> is the medical registry that is used to locate a CDL physical provider. You may use in-network or out-of-network providers for your CDL physical.