



WHEN TO DISINFECT HANDS?

- If no water is available for washing hands you should use a hand disinfectant.
- You should not wash hands more than 10 times a day because washing hands too often is damaging your skin. If hands are not visibly dirty but might be contaminated it is advised to use a hand disinfectant which will not remove the protecting skin flora.

WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED TO DO TO AVOID INFECTION?

- Always use clean, sterile instruments when injecting. Always use your own instruments (also lighter, tourniquet, water glass!)
- Clean and disinfect all blood-contaminated surfaces.
- Vaccination against Hepatitis A, B and tetanus are advisable. Make sure that your vaccinations are up-to-date.
- Use antibiotics properly. For example, antibiotics do not help against viral infections. If you do take antibiotics, use them exactly as directed by your doctor. Always finish the prescription; don't stop too early!
- Store your foodstuffs properly.
- Keep your pets healthy. This includes regular vaccinations and de-worming of dogs and cats.

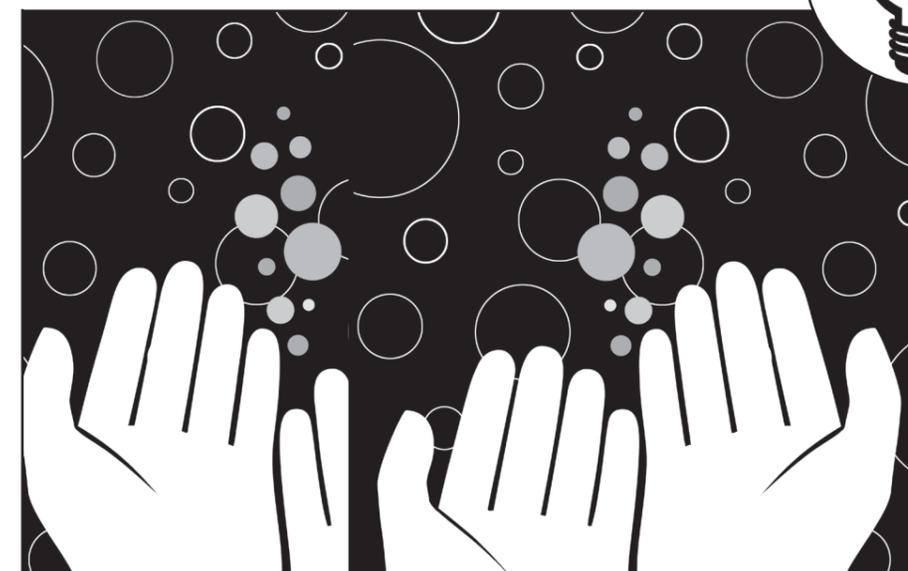
Further information and contact:

- verein@fixpunkt.org
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Last update: May 2013

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Washing hands



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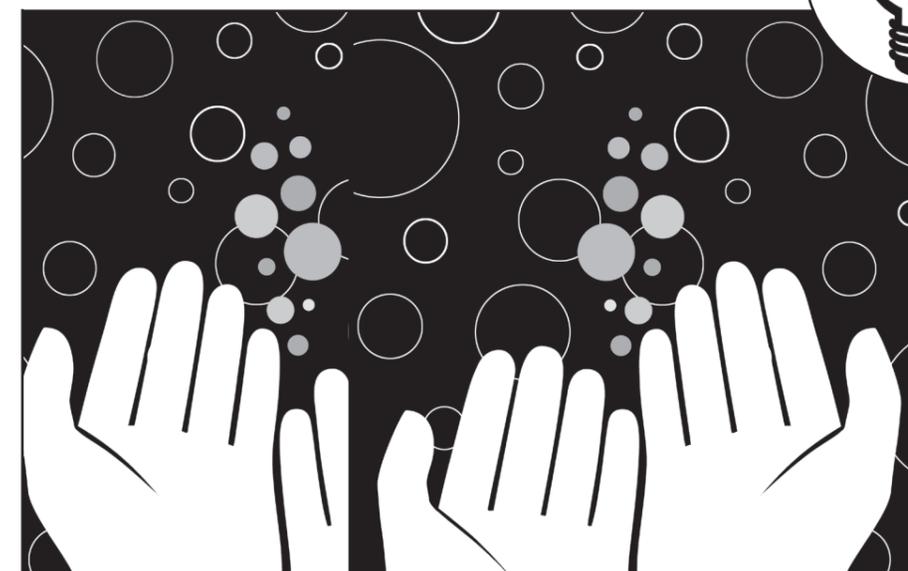
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Washing hands

Hand washing is one of the most important ways to prevent the spread of infection.

Hand washing is the simplest and most effective thing you can do in order to stop the spread of colds, runny noses, diarrhea and also sometimes more serious, life-threatening diseases.

You don't need any special cleansers or cleaning equipment- just soap, water and proper washing – and you can even get rid of germs that are resistant to strong antibiotics.

HAND WASHING CAMPAIGN

If you begin to keep track of when you wash your hands you may find out that it's not as often as you think. This has also, by the way, been found by several studies in the U.S.: it was proven in a study held in the summer of 2000 that 95 percent of Americans claimed that they always wash their hands after using the toilet. During an observation of public restrooms, however, (which all provided clean sinks, soap and towels) it was discovered that only two-thirds of all adults really washed their hands every time.

WHY SHOULD YOU WASH YOUR HANDS?

Germs are so small that you can not see them. Some of these germs can cause illnesses like diarrhea, colds and other more serious, sometimes even life-threatening diseases.

If you wash your hands correctly, you will get rid of most of the germs including some which are already resistant against antibiotics. Disease-causing germs enter your body when your unwashed hands touch your nose, mouth, eyes, or open wounds.

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While health care providers (doctors' offices, hospitals, etc.) have a professional responsibility to pay special care and attention to washing their hands, it is important that everyone make hand-washing a personal priority.

WHEN SHOULD YOU WASH YOUR HANDS?

- Before *and* after using intravenous drugs
- After *any* and *every* contact with your own or someone else's blood as well as blood-contaminated surfaces
- When you first arrive home
- Before preparing and eating meals
- After coming into contact with any uncooked food (especially fish, meat or poultry)
- After wiping after using the toilet or coming into contact with your own or someone else's feces
- After contact with pets or animals (petting)
- Before putting in and taking out contact lenses

Do not, however, wash your hands *too* often. Use alkali-free soap with a pH-balance of 5.5 in order to avoid damaging the chemical balance of your skin.

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HOW DO YOU CORRECTLY WASH YOUR HANDS?

How you wash your hands is just as important as *when* you wash your hands.

Just rinsing them quickly is not enough!

- Use soap and warm, running water
- Wash all surfaces thoroughly, including wrists, palms, backs of hands, fingers and under the fingernails
- Rub hands together for at least 10 to 15 seconds
- When drying, if possible, only use a clean towel, in public toilets only use disposable towels. It is better to pat your skin dry rather than rubbing to avoid chapping and cracking
- After washing your hands do not touch the (germ-ridden) faucets; use a paper towel to turn the water off.
- Apply hand lotion after washing to help prevent and soothe dry skin

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