



**PRISTINE CARE HOME HEALTH SERVICES, INC.**  
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## *Hand Hygiene: “It’s OK to ask.”*

### **Why is hand hygiene important?**

Home health patients are generally unwell, recovering from a surgery or an illness that may have decreased their immune system, leaving them at increased risk of infections. We want to prevent our patients from getting these infections, because these infections often cause lengthy and serious illnesses to those who are already generally unwell and/or have decreased immune response. One of the easiest and most effective ways to reduce infections is for all staff, patients, caregivers and visitors to practice good hand hygiene.

### **What is good hand hygiene?**

Good hand hygiene means washing, using either alcohol-based hand rubs/gels or soap and water to help stop the spread of germs. By stopping the spread of germs, we can reduce infections among patients.

### **Our commitment to you**

All of our staff treat hand hygiene seriously because we know this is one of the easiest ways to help keep patients as safe and healthy as possible. Our staff should clean their hands 'at each contact' or, put more simply, before and after touching each patient. During our home health visits, our staff will educate you on good hand hygiene practices. We invite you to join us in the fight against infection by achieving the best hand hygiene practices

### **It's OK to ask**

From time to time our staff can become very busy, and patients may wonder if their nurse, therapist or other healthcare provider cleaned their hands before and after touching them. As part of your role in the fight against infection, we hope you will remember that

**'It's OK to ask'.**



**IF YOU ARE IN ANY DOUBT, DON'T HESITATE TO REMIND  
OUR STAFF ABOUT HAND HYGIENE!**



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## HOW TO CLEAN HANDS WITH ALCOHOL-BASED HAND RUBS/GELS



Alcohol-based hand rubs significantly reduce the number of germs on the skin. They are fast acting and can cause less skin irritation than frequent use of soap and water. Alcohol-based hand rubs don't work well when skin is visibly unclean because they don't release and rinse away dirt the way soap and water does.

The key to proper hand hygiene with an alcohol-based hand rubs is: Apply the product to the palm of one hand and rub hands together covering all surfaces of the hands and fingers, until hands are dry.

## HOW TO CLEAN HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER

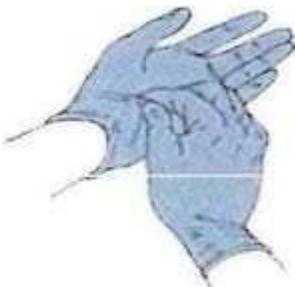
Soap and running water remove dirt and grease from hands. This is the best way to clean your hands when they are visibly dirty.

### The six key steps to good hand washing with soap and water are:

1. Turn on water and let it run over hands.
2. Apply soap.
3. Rub hands together in order to work up a lather.
4. Cover and rub all surfaces of the hands. Lather and rub for at least 10 to 15 seconds. Rinse hands thoroughly.
5. Pat hands dry with a clean paper towel.
6. Use the paper towel to turn off the faucet (and turn door knob, if applicable)
7. Dispose the paper towel in a waste bin.



## THE ROLE OF GLOVES



Gloves can be a helpful and important supplement to good hand hygiene. However, gloves don't eliminate the need for hand washing.