

More Information

All staff in Blackrock Clinic are trained in hand washing technique and would be delighted to answer any questions that you may have in relation to hand washing. They may also direct you to the nearest hand washing facility and show you how to wash your hands correctly.

For further information please contact the infection control team in Blackrock Clinic.

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HAND HYGIENE

*Information and
Advice for Patients
and Visitors*



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Hand hygiene is the single most important factor in preventing avoidable illness's eg health care associated infection.

We cannot see germs (bacteria) with the naked eye. Hands will pick up germs (bacteria) when you handle anything, and even though hands may appear to be clean, the germ (bacteria) may be there.

*Remember!
clean hands save lives.*

When to clean your hands

- Wash hands when they are visibly contaminated with dirt, soil, organic material
- When entering and leaving the hospital
- Before and after all patient contact
- After moving from a contaminated to a clean area after contact with an individual patient
- After removing gloves
- Before and after eating
- After personal bodily functions such as blowing nose and using the lavatory
- Patients with vomiting or diarrhoea must strictly wash their hands with soap and water

How to clean your hands

Liquid soaps and alcohol gels kill 99.9% of germs that can cause infection. We recommend soap and water to wash with, if your hands are visibly unclean.

- Before you apply soap, wet your hands thoroughly
- Wash front and back of hands, remembering the most frequently missed areas ie between finger, fingertips and thumbs

- Are you right or left handed?
Be aware that right handed people tend to wash the left hand more thoroughly (vice versa)
- Always wash underneath wedding band rings
- Always rinse and dry hands thoroughly, hand drying is as important as hand washing

The 30 second rule with soap and water. It should take 30 seconds to wash your hands.

Alcohol Gel

Specifically designed alcohol dispensers ensure that alcohol gel is available where and when it is required. Alcohol gel is provided inside every patient room and at the entrance to every unit. We recommend that alcohol gel be used, once hands are visibly clean.

When caring for a patient

Always keep the skin on your hands in good condition. Moisturise your hands regularly throughout the day. This will protect you hands and help prevent dry skin.

- Always cover any cuts with a waterproof dressing
- Nails must be kept short and cut smoothly
- Nail varnish and / or false nails must not be worn
- All wrist and hand jewellery (except plain wedding band) must be removed
- Hands must be washed with soap and water after assistance with bodily functions, vomiting/diarrhoea