

DEPARTMENT: Infection Control

POLICY: IC - 352

SUBJECT: Hand Hygiene

PURPOSE: To provide guidelines to promote the prevention of cross-contamination or transmission of organisms from one person or object to another.
Frances Mahon Deaconess Hospital follows the CDC recommended guidelines for hand hygiene.

RESPONSIBILITY:

- All Staff
- Infection Control

POLICY:

1. Hand washing is the single most important measure to reduce the risk of transmitting organisms from one person to another or from one site to another on the same patient.
 - a. Hand washing indications (some examples, but not all instances possible);
 - i. When visibly dirty
 - ii. When contaminated with proteinaceous material
 - iii. Before and after contact with blood, body fluids, and moist body surfaces.
 - iv. When exposed to potential spore-forming organisms
 - v. After contact with inanimate objects that are likely to be contaminated with pathogenic microorganisms, such as urine measuring devices and secretion collection apparatuses.
 - vi. When coming on duty.
 - vii. When going off duty.
 - viii. Before and after wearing gloves.
 - ix. Before and after patient contact.
 - x. Before and after preparing medications.
 - xi. Before and after preparing food.
 - xii. Before and after eating.
 - xiii. After personal use of toilet.
 - xiv. When hands are soiled, including after sneezing, coughing, or blowing nose.
2. Soap dispensers and sinks are available throughout the facility for use for hand washing. Routine handwashing will be accomplished in the following manner:
 - i. Turn water on and adjust temperature.
 - ii. Wet hands and apply a sufficient amount (about 1 teaspoon, the size of a quarter) of soap to make a good lather.
 - iii. Vigorously scrub all surfaces of wrists and hands for 10-15seconds and clean under fingernails.
 - iv. Rinse hands under running water with hands pointing down so that the water runs off the hands not back towards the elbows.
 - v. Dry hands with paper towels and dispose of towels.
 - vi. Use paper towel to turn off water.
3. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers that do not require the use of water may be used when hands are not visibly soiled and when hand washing facilities are not available. If hands are visibly soiled and no water is available, a pre-moistened towelette should be used to

remove visible soil prior to using the alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Proper use of alcohol based hand rub can be accomplished following the steps below:

- a. Use an adequate amount of product, as recommended by the manufacturer. Generally, this is a dime to nickel sized portion (enough to keep the hands wet during 10 seconds of vigorous rubbing).
 - b. With the product in the palm of your hand, rub the fingertips from the opposite hand (including thumb) in a circular pattern. Transfer the surplus product to the opposite hand and repeat process.
 - c. Bring the hands together (palm-sides together) and rub vigorously. Making sure to spread the fingers to allow the product to get between the fingers.
 - d. Rub the product from the palms of the hands onto the back of the hands making sure to rub the product between the fingers and down to the nail beds.
 - e. Rub remaining product over all surfaces of the wrist.
 - f. Continue rubbing until the product has completely dried. Do not wash off surplus product or dry hands on paper towels; keep rubbing until the entire product has dried.
4. Gloves are worn for three non-aseptic reasons in the hospital:
- a. To provide a protective barrier and to prevent gross contamination of hands when touching blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, mucous membranes and nonintact skin.
 - b. Reduce the likelihood that microorganisms present on the hands of personnel will be transmitted to patients during invasive or other patient-care procedures that involve touching a patient's mucous membranes or non-intact skin.
 - c. Reduce the likelihood that hands or personnel contaminated with microorganisms from a patient or other source can transmit microorganisms to another patient.
 - i. Gloves will be removed after care/procedure has been provided, discarded appropriately, and hands will be washed.
 - ii. Gloves do not replace the need to wash hands.
 - iii. Jewelry on the hands should be absent or limited to the wedding band. Rings with protruding prongs or stones can cause tears in gloves.
5. Misc. hand care:
- a. Nails should be short enough to allow wearing of gloves without puncture of the tips.
 - b. Artificial nails have been associated with fungal infections of the nail bed and carriage of bacteria, and should not be worn by direct care providers. (See policy HR-590 Professional Appearance (Dress Code).
 - c. Lotion should be used to prevent hand dryness that can occur with frequent hand washing. **NOTE:** Petroleum based hand lotions should not be used since these products can cause latex to lose its effectiveness as a barrier against microorganisms.

REVIEW AND REVISION STATEMENT:

This policy will be reviewed and revised as necessary and at least annually by the Infection Control Practitioner, Physician Advisor, CEO, and FNP. (original document 10/1993).