

# Wash your hands

Hand hygiene is an effective way to protect yourself and others from infectious diseases. Our hands constantly get into contact with surfaces on which germs can be found. If we touch our mouth, nose or eyes, the pathogens can easily enter the body through the mucous membranes and trigger infectious diseases. Regular and thorough hand washing offers simple and effective protection.

Here are some tips, if you want to wash your hands effectively:

- a) **Wash regularly:** After visiting the toilet, before eating or preparing food and especially after blowing your nose or coughing.
- b) **Get your hands wet:** Hold your hands under running water. Choose a comfortable water temperature. It must not be hot.
- c) **Apply soap:** Your palm and back of your hands, as well as your thumbs, the spaces between your fingers and fingertips should be soaped thoroughly.
- d) **Take some time:** It takes at least 20 seconds to wash your hands thoroughly with soap (or longer if your hands are very dirty).
- e) **Rinse:** Now rinse your hands thoroughly under running water.
- f) **Dry carefully:** Drying your hands - including the spaces between your fingers - is part of an effective hand washing practice. Drying removes germs that still stick to the hands or in the remaining water on the hands.



Please find further information about protecting yourself and other by washing hands correctly or a 'cough etiquette' on the website of the The German Federal Center for Health Education (BZgA): [www.infektionsschutz.de/haendewaschen](http://www.infektionsschutz.de/haendewaschen)

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