

Health Hints

Hand Washing's Role In Good Health

(NAPSA)—Good hand washing techniques are essential, not only in the wake of clean-up after natural disasters but also in everyday life. Personal hygiene and measures to prevent disease spread have been encouraged by numerous health-oriented organizations, including the Centers for Disease Control.

“Good hand washing techniques are important for everyone, every day. It seems so simple, yet it is acknowledged by experts in infectious disease as the single most important thing you can do to reduce the spread of infection,” says Carolyn Twomey, RN, director of clinical affairs, Regent Medical.

As a guide, Twomey recommends singing four stanzas of the childhood song “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.” That should take about 20 seconds, which is how long your hand washing should last.

Twomey points out that only 33 percent of the general public washes their hands in public restrooms according to a recent survey by the Bayer Pharmaceutical Division and Wirthlin Worldwide Research. “The single greatest influencer to wash is whether or not others are washing. Individuals feel peer pressure when they exit the lavatory area. But when individuals don't wash, what is the first thing they touch on their way out? The doorknob of the restroom. Even if you wash, what's the first thing you touch on your way out? The doorknob,” she adds.

Here are some tips to avoid transmitting or acquiring infections related to hand contamination. They're especially important to those working in areas where communicable diseases are highly



Proper hand washing can help prevent the spread of a number of diseases.

suspect and are also important during cold and flu season.

- Teach yourself and your children to sneeze into the bend of the arm and not into the hand.
- When using a public restroom, wash your hands while singing four stanzas of the “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” song, but leave the water running. Grab your paper towel and dry your hands—but don't toss it yet. Turn off the water at the sink with the paper towel. Then open the door with the paper towel and dispose of it outside the restroom.

“These techniques help arrest the spread of infection every day in every situation. They are key for health care workers. Health care workers get maximum benefit by washing with antiseptic/antimicrobial cleansers. The cleaners should have a persistent effect, meaning they continue killing microbes long after washing. Regent Medical's Hibiclens and Hibistat products are examples of products having broad-spectrum microbial kill with persistent effect,” Twomey says.

For more information, visit www.regentmedical.com.