



# **HAND-WASHING: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW, WHY IT'S SO IMPORTANT**

According to the CDC forty million Americans contract illnesses every year due to bacteria on the hands and around eighty thousand of them die. Almost four fifths of all infections that cause illnesses can be prevented simply by washing your hands properly.

## Facts about Hand Washing

- Around two to ten million bacteria can be found between our fingertips and elbows.
- After a person uses the toilet, the number of germs that are on their fingertips, doubles.
- According to 2007 survey, only seventy- seven percent of the people actually wash their hands after they use a public restroom. Men are much more likely to skip washing their hands after using a toilet than women. It gets worse, teenagers are even less likely to wash their hands, only fifty-three percent. YUCK!
- Wet or damp hands spread thousands more germs than do dry hands.
- Approximately eighty percent of all infections get transmitted by the hands.

## Tips for Kids and Adults

- Hands should be washed before preparing food as well as prior to eating food.
- Hands should be washed after touching contaminated surfaces such as changing baby diapers, lifting toilet seats, using the toilet, or touching an animal or its waste.
- If you sneeze or cough into your hand. (This is why you should use your elbow instead)

Use soap and water to thoroughly wash all surfaces for about twenty seconds or sing the Happy Birthday song twice, rinse, dry and you are done. These simple steps can help keep you healthier and safer. Alcohol based hand sanitizers will also work to reduce your chances of infecting or being infected.

