

Infection prevention and control Hand hygiene information for patients

Why is keeping my hands clean necessary?

Hand hygiene can protect you from picking up germs on your hands which may cause you harm. Hands may look clean, but germs are too small to see and are always present, some are harmful, some aren't. The best way to remove them is by washing your hands.

When to keep your hands clean

It is important to clean your hands:

- before meals
- after visiting the toilet or commode
- after sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose
- whenever hands are visibly dirty.

Using hygienic hand rub (gel)

Use the hygienic hand rub (gel) when entering and exiting the ward and encourage your visitors to do the same. You may have a hand gel dispenser at the foot of your bed which you and your visitors can use.

Hand wipes

Getting to a hand wash basin may not be easy. This is often the case when you find it hard to move around the ward. We will give you a detergent hand wipe to use **before** your meals. Please use the wipe before you eat.



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Advice on general hand care

- Dry hands well with paper towels to prevent chapping; wet hands will pick up more germs from objects than dry hands.
- Cuts and abrasions should be covered with a waterproof dressing.
- Protect your skin by using hand cream. This will prevent dryness and soreness.
- Keep fingernails short and clean.

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

The Christie is committed to producing high quality, evidence based information for patients. Our patient information adheres to the principles and quality statements of the Information Standard. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net**

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham or Salford. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.

Contact The Christie Hotline for urgent support and specialist advice
The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

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