

World Hand Hygiene Day 5.5.2021

YOUR FOCUS

Washing hands vs. disinfecting hands – what makes most sense in common everyday situations?

Wash
your hands:



- AFTER using the (private) toilet
- BEFORE having meal
- BEFORE preparing food (non-commercial)
- AFTER preparing food (non-commercial)
- AFTER blowing your nose
- BEFORE facial care
- when coming in from outside (without increased risk of pathogen contact)
- when disinfection would be useful, but no disinfectant is on hand
- AFTER touching a (healthy) pet

Disinfect
your hands:



- when someone in the family or household has a communicable disease such as common cold: sick persons disinfect hands BEFORE contact with others; healthy persons disinfect hands AFTER contact with sick person
- BEFORE caring for a relative or friend with a weakened immune system or chronic wounds (home care, e.g. after early discharge from hospital)
- BEFORE contact with a relative or friend who is at risk of infection (e.g. immunocompromised)
- when there is a risk of being in contact with pathogens and no clean water to wash hands is available (e.g. when travelling or on the go, at the supermarket, on public transportation)
- AFTER touching a (potentially sick) animal or its body fluids

In general, hand washing is recommended and sufficient in our private lives. Nevertheless, there are situations in which hand disinfection is indicated or may become necessary instead of hand washing.

Please note: hand disinfection is more gentle on the skin than frequent hand washing