

## If You Are a Patient

Hand hygiene is a simple and effective method of helping to prevent the spread of infection. Infection can affect anyone. However, people with background illnesses affecting their immune system and newborn babies with immature immune systems have an increased risk of acquiring an infection.

Infections can have significant consequences including additional treatment, use of antibiotics, pain and psychological stress. When you go home, the risk of you spreading bugs is much lower. But you should still keep good practice of hand hygiene at all times.

The best way to stop picking up and spreading infection is to:

- Remember to wash your hands with soap and water after going to the toilet and before eating
- Wash your hands after changing the baby's nappy
- Avoid changing the baby's nappy on the hospital bed. Keep the baby in the cot while changing the nappy
- Clean your hands before feeding the baby
- Wash your hands before entering and when leaving the neonatal intensive care unit
- Clean your hands before and after touching your wound
- Use your own soap, flannel, sponge and razor
- Avoid sharing food, newspapers or other personal items with other patients
- Tell staff if facilities in the hospital is not clean

## If You Are a Visitor

If you're visiting a patient, clean your hands when you enter the hospital and when you leave. Hand washing facilities are at the entrance to the hospital. If you're visiting for a long time or helping a patient or caring for a baby, clean your hands regularly while you're there. Hand washing facilities are available in all inpatient rooms in the hospital and alcohol gel is available at each patient bedside. If there is any dirt on your hands or under your fingernails, you will need to use soap and water. You can then make sure they are properly clean by using alcohol hand rub.

Use soap and water or alcohol hand gel to clean your hands regularly.

**All staff are happy for you to remind them to clean their hands before they touch you or your baby.**

## How to protect Your Skin

Cover all cuts with a waterproof plaster. Our hands need a regular skincare routine. Moisturise your skin especially during the cold weather.



**For further information contact:**

**Infection Control Department,  
National Maternity Hospital**



# Hand Hygiene Information



## Six Step Technique

-  Palm-to palm.
-  Right palm over back of left hand, left palm over back of right hand.
-  Palm-to palm fingers interlaced.
-  Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlaced.
-  Rotational rubbing backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa.
-  Rotational rubbing of right thumb clasped in left palm and vice versa. Wrists are similarly rubbed.