

## St. Mary's Medical Center (SF) Policy

---

**SUBJECT:** Hand Hygiene 100.5.011

**POLICY:** This Dignity Health system-wide policy and procedure has been reviewed and approved for use at St. Mary's Medical Center (SF).

**PROCEDURE:**

1. Dignity Health system-wide policies are circulated in Policy Manager.

2. To access the policy, click on the “**Content Linkage**”



icon at the upper right hand portion of the screen, and the policy will display.

**Addendum:**

1. Individuals who touch patients or touch items that will be used by patients should clean their hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water. Individuals must ensure all surfaces of hands and fingers, including thumbs and fingernails, are included when completing hand hygiene.
2. Gloves should be used when caring for patients with suspected or confirmed *C. difficile*. After removing gloves, hand hygiene should be completed using soap and water.
3. Hand Hygiene compliance is monitored through direct observation by trained observers. Compliance data is collected on hand hygiene opportunities (indications for hand hygiene) and glove use. Immediate feedback/coaching is provided.

**APPROVERS:**

<b>Responsible Position</b>	
Infection Control Manager	
<b>Approvals</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>
Infection Control Manager	06/2021
<b>Past Approvals</b>	
06/2019	

## St. Mary's Medical Center (SF) Policy

---

**DIGNITY HEALTH  
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Hand Hygiene		
<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	100.5.011	<b>DATE APPROVED:</b>	February 8, 2017
		<b>DATE UPDATED:</b>	March 25, 2020
<b>APPLIES TO:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> System Offices <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acute Care Entities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-acute Care Entities		

**POLICY:**

It is the policy of Dignity Health that all healthcare workers shall perform appropriate hand hygiene according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines as defined in this policy.

**AFFECTED DEPARTMENTS:**

All departments in Dignity Health acute care and non-acute care facilities are affected by this policy.

**PURPOSE:**

Hand hygiene is performed to remove dirt, organic material and transient microorganisms from the hands of health care workers. Appropriate hand hygiene is a critical component in preventing the transmission of microorganisms between personnel and patients in health care settings. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) states that hand hygiene is the single most important procedure for preventing health care acquired infections.

**PROCEDURE:**

**A. Indications for Hand Hygiene**

1. The choice of plain soap, soap with antiseptic agents, alcohol-based hand rub, or surgical antiseptics should be based on the degree of hand contamination.
2. At a minimum, health care workers shall wash hands with soap (plain or antimicrobial) and water under the following circumstances:
  - a. Hands are visibly soiled
  - b. Before handling food
  - c. After using restroom
  - d. After contact with blood and body fluids.

Effective Date: February 8, 2017

Updated Date: March 25, 2020

Hand Hygiene

© Copyright 2017-2020 Dignity Health. For Internal Use Only

Page 1 of 4

3. Health care workers shall decontaminate hands using alcohol-based hand rub or washing with soap (plain or antimicrobial) and water under the following circumstances:
  - a. Before and after patient contact
  - b. Before donning sterile gloves
  - c. Before inserting an invasive device
  - d. Before handling an invasive device, including before accessing intravenous devices for medication administration
  - e. Before moving from a contaminated body site to a clean body site on the same patient
  - f. Before preparing or handling medication in anticipation of patient care (e.g. in medication room or at medication cart before patient encounter)
  - g. After contact with patient's intact or non-intact skin, mucous membranes, wound dressings or other objects likely to be contaminated
  - h. After contact with inanimate objects that are used for direct patient care in the immediate vicinity of the patient
  - i. After removing gloves

## **B. Hand Hygiene Technique**

1. When decontaminating hands using alcohol-based hand rub, apply product to palm of one hand and rub hands together, covering all surfaces of hands and fingers, until hands are dry.
2. When washing hands with soap and water, wet hands with water, apply product to hands, and rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds, covering all surfaces of the hands and fingers. Rinse hands with water and dry thoroughly with a disposable towel. Use towel to turn off the faucet.
3. Surgical Hand Antisepsis Technique
  - a. Remove rings, watches and bracelets before beginning the surgical hand scrub.
  - b. Remove debris from underneath fingernails using a nail cleaner under running water.
  - c. When performing surgical hand antisepsis using an antimicrobial soap, scrub hands and forearms. Refer to facility guidance for specifics.
  - d. When using an alcohol-based surgical hand-scrub product with persistent activity, prewash hands and forearms completely before applying the alcohol solution. Refer to facility guidance for specifics. After application of the alcohol-based product as recommended, allow hands and forearms to dry thoroughly before donning sterile gloves.

## **C. Other Aspects of Hand Hygiene**

1. Nails
  - a. The natural nails of health care workers are to be kept neatly manicured and short, not extending more than 1/4" past the tips of the fingers.

- b. Artificial nails are prohibited for personnel who perform direct hands-on patient care or have a role in patient care services, such as environmental services, pharmacy, sterile processing or nutrition services.
  - c. Basic nail polish should not be chipped and in good condition.
- 2. Skin Care
  - a. Healthcare workers shall use hospital-approved hand lotion.
- 3. Gloves
  - a. Use of gloves is not a substitute for hand hygiene.
  - b. Remove gloves after caring for a patient.
  - c. Do not wear the same pair of gloves for the care of more than one patient.
  - d. Do not wash gloves.
  - e. Change gloves during patient care if moving from a contaminated body site to a clean body site.
- 4. Special Circumstances
  - a. There may be special scenarios that dictate a change in practice such as an outbreak of norovirus or Clostridium difficile. In these circumstances, there may be a change in practice.

#### **DEFINITIONS:**

**Alcohol-based hand rub:** An alcohol-containing preparation designed for application to the hands for reducing the number of viable microorganisms on the hands.

**Antiseptic agent:** Antimicrobial substances that are applied to the skin to reduce the number of microbial flora. Examples include alcohols, chlorhexidine, iodine.

**Antiseptic hand wash:** Washing hands with water and soap or other detergents containing an antiseptic agent.

**Antiseptic hand rub:** Applying an antiseptic hand rub product to all surfaces of the hands to reduce the number of microorganisms present.

**Artificial nails:** Any fingernail enhancement, resin bonding, shellac or methacrylate polymer (long wearing nail polish), extensions, tips, gels, or acrylics that are not a part of the natural nail.

**Decontaminate hands:** Reduce bacterial counts on hands by performing antiseptic hand rub or antiseptic hand wash.

**Hand Hygiene:** A general term that applies to either handwashing, antiseptic hand wash, antiseptic hand rub, or surgical hand antisepsis.

**Health care worker:** Any employee, licensed independent practitioner, student, trainee, volunteer or other contract personnel physically working in an acute or non-acute healthcare setting, regardless of clinical responsibility or patient contact.

**Visibly soiled hands:** Hands showing visible dirt or visibly contaminated with proteinaceous material, blood, or other body fluids.

#### **REFERENCES:**

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, MMWR. (2002). Guideline for Hand Hygiene in Health-Care Settings. Recommendations of the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee and the HICPAC/SHEA/APIC/IDSA Hand hygiene Task Force. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5116.pdf>
- Ellingston K, Haas JP, et. al. Strategies to Prevent Health-care Associated Infections through Hand Hygiene. (2014). Infection Control. 35, pp937-960. Doi:10.10861651677
- Guide to Hand Hygiene Programs for Infection Prevention, APIC Implementation Guide, (2015).
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (March 18, 2020) Frequently Asked Questions about Hand Hygiene for Healthcare Personnel Responding to COVID-19. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control/hcp-hand-hygiene-faq.html>

#### **STATUTORY/REGULATORY AUTHORITIES:**

- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services: Section A0716; A0747
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration: 1910.1030 (d)(2) (iii-vi)
- The Joint Commission: National Patient Safety Goal 07.01.01