



Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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HAND WASHING/HAND SANITIZING ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Adapted from the University of Pennsylvania's Perelman School of Medicine Guidance Documents

(www.med.upenn.edu/antibiotics/resources/hand_washing.pdf)

The District 97 Board of Education recognizes the health of its students is influenced by personal hygiene. Keeping hands clean through improved hand hygiene is one of the most important steps that can be taken to avoid illness and curb the spreading of germs to others. To support this effort, the district has developed procedures to ensure access to hand washing and/or hand sanitizing.

Purpose of the Hand washing/Hand Sanitizing Procedures

- To reduce germs, contaminants and bacteria found on the hands to safe levels in order to prevent or to eliminate the spread of bacteria and viruses thus limiting the spread of illness in the cafeteria and classroom.
- To reinforce personal hygiene practices with all students.

Hand Washing Procedures

1. Wet hands under warm, running water.
2. Apply soap. Vigorously rub hands during washing for at least 20 seconds with special attention paid to the backs of the hands, wrists, between the fingers and under the fingernails.
3. Rinse hands well under a steady stream of warm water.
4. Dry hands with a single-use towel or a warm air dryer.
5. Turn off the faucet using a paper towel, covering washed hands to prevent re-contamination from the faucet.

When To Wash Hands

Hand washing should occur:

- before and after eating and drinking;
- after playing outside;
- after sneezing, coughing or blowing the nose;
- after touching someone who is sick;
- after handling trash;
- after touching an animal;
- any time there is concern that there has been contact with an infectious agent or environmental contaminant;
- before handling food for others;
- after using the restroom;
- and whenever hands appear dirty.

Use Of Hand Sanitizers

Hand sanitizers may be used in place of hand washing when access to soap and hand sinks are not available, though hand sanitizer is not effective if hands are visibly dirty and/or greasy. In those instances, hands should be washed with soap and water instead. Only hand sanitizers containing 60-90% ethyl alcohol or isopropanol in concentration with equivalent sanitizing strength may be used as an adjunct to proper hand washing. Hand sanitizer should not be used more than four times per day as efficacy decreases beyond this level of usage.

Directions for using hand sanitizer:

- Apply hand sanitizer product on both hands.
- Rub hands together, spreading the sanitizer product on all surfaces of the hand.
- Continue rubbing hands together until hands feel dry.
- This should take around 20 seconds.
- Do not rinse or wipe off the hand sanitizer before it's dry.

Note: Research indicates that hand sanitizers may not be effective in removing certain allergens, including peanut allergens, and may instead spread the allergen.

Role of the School Nurse

It is the school nurse's role to support the classroom teacher and principal in instructing teachers and students. The school nurse should:

- Provide instructional materials for use in the classroom and restrooms that reinforce proper hand washing.
- Assist the classroom teacher in instructing students on proper hand washing procedures.
- Communicate with the principal, food service manager and teachers about any concerns related to increases in visits to the nurse's office that may be the result of improper hand washing or a foodborne illness outbreak.

Role of the Student

The student should:

- Become familiar with the proper steps of hand washing and know when to wash hands.
- Develop good hand washing habits.
- Take personal responsibility for washing hands not only at school, but when away from school.

Role of the Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians can encourage their children by showing interest and displaying positive examples of hand washing.

Evaluation/Monitoring

Principals, teachers, school nurses, custodial staff and parents/guardians make a significant contribution to learning hand hygiene practices. Students will increase learning time and practice good hand washing or sanitizing when time for hand washing is structured into the day, and supplies are provided at all hand sinks for hand washing. Therefore, it is essential that the entire community embraces the practices of proper hand washing and supports the child's practice through observation and repetition.