

# Wash Your Hands

During an emergency, keeping hands clean can help keep you and others healthy.



Washing hands with soap and clean water is the best way to remove germs that can make you and others sick. If you don't have soap and clean water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



## Stay healthy by washing your hands many times each day:

### BEFORE

- preparing food
- eating
- caring for someone who is sick
- treating a cut or a wound

### AFTER

- Using the bathroom
- Changing diapers or cleaning a child who has used the toilet
- Blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- Touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- Handling pet food or pet treats
- Touching garbage



## What is the right way to wash your hands?

1. Wet your hands with clean running water (warm or cold) and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap.
3. Scrub all surfaces of your hands, including the palms, backs, fingers, between your fingers, and under your nails.
4. Keep scrubbing for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song twice.
5. Rinse your hands well under running water.
6. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air-dry them.



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov/handwashing](http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing)