



Help Your Child Stay Healthy

Germs, like bacteria, viruses and fungi, are found all around us. Some are harmful and can make us ill, by causing infections like colds, flu and tummy upsets.

Others, like the bacteria in our gut, are actually useful to us, by helping us digest our food properly.

You can't stop your child coming into contact with germs, but what you can do is teach them that through the use of some simple hygiene measures, they can reduce their risk of picking up an infection.

This is especially important once they start school as they will encounter a variety of different germs and infections from other children.

Hand hygiene - helping to control the spread of germs

- Germs can be picked up in several ways:
- Breathing - when an infected person talks, sneezes or coughs, they transfer germs into the air which can land on surfaces or be breathed in directly by others.
- Touch - germs left on contaminated surfaces such as toilet flushes, taps, door handles, toys and kitchen surfaces can be picked up and transferred into our body when we touch our eyes, nose, mouth, or a cut.
- Eating - stomach bugs usually arise by eating food that is contaminated with germs or not cooked properly.

Children can help protect themselves from infection by washing their hands with soap and water:

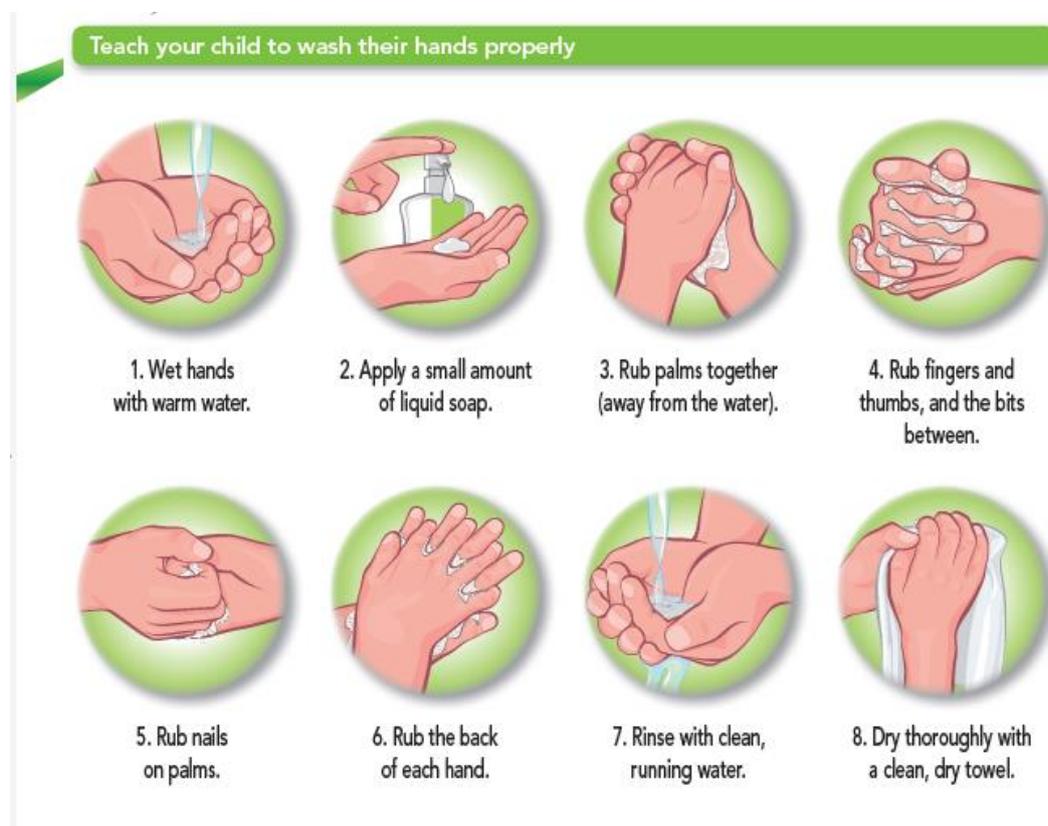
- before eating
- after going to the toilet
- after playing with a pet or animal
- after coughing, sneezing or blowing their nose
- after touching something dirty (e.g. chewed pencils or a used tissue etc.)
- after playing outside
- whenever they look dirty.



Explain to your child why you wash your hands.

- ✓ Encourage '8 step' hand washing.
- ✓ Teach your child to wash their hands for as long as it takes to sing the 'Happy Birthday' song twice.

Remember to wash your own hands properly - as your child will copy you.



Exclusion periods for infectious conditions

When a child has an infectious illness, you should keep them away from school to prevent passing on the infection to others. Below is a table showing the standard exclusion periods in the UK.

Disease	Exclusion period
Chickenpox	For 5 days after the rash appears
Colds	None
Conjunctivitis	None
Diarrhoea and vomiting	Until 48 hours after the last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting
Flu	Until recovered
Head lice	None
Measles	For 4 days after the rash appears
Meningitis (bacterial)	Until recovered
Meningitis (viral)	None
Threadworms	None