



## ALCOHOL HAND RUBS

- are alcohol-based liquid, gel, or foam hand cleaners
- don't require water to clean hands
- kill most germs that cause disease and illness (like colds or flu)
- are not effective on germs that live in your intestines

*Not all hand rubs contain alcohol:  
Check the label. Use only the  
Alcohol-Based Rubs with at least  
60 % alcohol.*

## USE SOAP AND WATER INSTEAD OF ALCOHOL HAND RUB

- when hands are visibly dirty or soiled
- before eating or preparing food, after handling raw meat, after handling animal waste, and after using the restroom, changing diapers, or assisting someone with toileting

[www.cdc.gov/Features/HandWashing](http://www.cdc.gov/Features/HandWashing)

**We are partners in  
keeping healthy.**



**Together we can stop the  
spread of germs.**

NOTE: This information is NOT intended to address specific hand decontamination requirements for health professionals caring for patients.



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**VA Wants You  
To  
CLEAN YOUR HANDS**



This information from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is for veterans, their families, friends, visitors, volunteers, and employees. It describes when and how to clean hands by using soap and water, or by using alcohol hand rubs (alcohol hand sanitizers). It provides basic cleaning instruction and describes when and how to clean hands to reduce the spread of germs.

## REMEMBER TO CLEAN YOUR HANDS:

### **Before...**

- ...eating or preparing food (use soap and water)
- ...caring for someone who is sick
- ...treating a cut or wound (use alcohol hand rub)
- ...visiting a veteran's room

### **After....**

- ...going to the bathroom (use soap and water)
- ...caring for someone sick
- ...blowing your nose
- ...coughing or sneezing
- ...touching garbage
- ...handling raw meat (use soap and water)
- ...touching an animal
- ...handling animal waste (use soap and water)
- ...changing diapers or assisting someone with toileting (use soap and water)
- ...treating a cut or wound (use alcohol hand rub)
- ...leaving a veteran's room



# ***Cleaning hands properly is easy and quick!***

## **USING SOAP AND WATER**

1. Wet hands using water that is a comfortable temperature
2. Add soap to make lather
3. Rub palms, back of hands, and between fingers
4. Rub for at least 15 seconds
5. Rinse hands thoroughly and dry well



## **USING ALCOHOL HAND RUB (also called alcohol hand sanitizer)**

1. Apply to the palm of one hand (enough to use on BOTH hands)
2. Rub palms, back of hands, and between fingers
3. Rub until hands are dry (if it does not take at least 30 seconds, you may need to add more alcohol hand rub)



***Clean hands help keep germs away.***