

School Health Promotion Newsletter Articles

DECEMBER: Wash Your Hands



Very Short Text:

Did you know that nearly 22 million school days are lost annually due to the common cold? Washing hands is the most important and easiest action we can take to prevent ourselves from getting sick and from spreading illnesses—like the common cold, the flu, strep throat and pink eye. Encourage your kids to wash their hands frequently throughout the day, especially before eating; after going to the bathroom; and after coughing, sneezing or using a tissue. Lather with soap and warm water, then scrub your palms, back of hands, between fingers, and under nails for at least 20 seconds. Rinse well, use a paper towel to shut off the faucet and to dry hands completely.

For more information about the 6 steps of proper handing washing, visit the Health Department's website: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/handwashing

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Did you know that nearly 22 million school days are lost annually due to the common cold? Washing hands is the most important and easiest action we can take to prevent ourselves from getting sick and from spreading illnesses—like the common cold, the flu, strep throat and pink eye. Encourage your kids to wash their hands frequently throughout the day, especially before eating; after going to the bathroom; and after coughing, sneezing or using a tissue.

6 steps to proper hand washing:

1. Use soap and warm water.
2. Make a lather.
3. Scrub thoroughly for 20 seconds. (Tell kids they can sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice.)
4. Make sure you wash your palms, back of hands, between fingers, under nails.
5. Rinse well and use a paper towel to shut off the faucet.
6. Dry hands completely.

For more information about proper hand washing, visit the Health Department's website: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/handwashing



Long Text:

Did you know that nearly 22 million school days are lost annually due to the common cold? Washing hands is the most important and easiest action we can take to prevent ourselves from getting sick and from spreading illnesses—like the common cold, the flu, strep throat and pink eye. Encourage your kids to wash their hands frequently throughout the day. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are a good alternative when soap and water are not available to wash hands.

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2. Make a lather.
3. Scrub thoroughly for 20 seconds. (Tell kids they can sing the “Happy Birthday” song twice.)
4. Make sure you wash your palms, back of hands, between fingers, under nails.
5. Rinse well and use a paper towel to shut off the faucet.
6. Dry hands completely.

Frequent and proper hand washing kills the germs that cause:

- gastro-intestinal illnesses, such as norovirus and E. coli
- influenza
- the common cold
- strep throat
- staph infection
- pink eye
- many other diseases

Hands should always be washed BEFORE:

- touching eyes, nose and mouth
- inserting or removing contact lenses
- preparing food
- eating

Hands should always be washed AFTER:

- using the toilet
- coughing, sneezing or using a tissue
- eating, drinking or smoking
- touching cuts, burns or infected areas on the skin
- handling raw meat and poultry
- changing diapers
- touching animals
- touching public surfaces like door handles, gas pumps, shopping carts, etc.

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