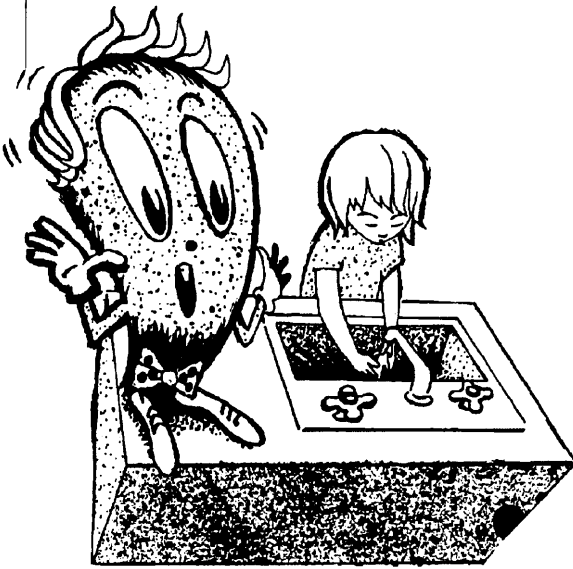


Clean hands *for* healthy children



*Mike the Microbe helps us
learn how to wash our hands*

Safe Food for Children

A series of lessons for
parents & child care providers

Lesson 1

Lesson 1

What to teach children about washing hands

Parents and child care providers should set good examples by washing their hands frequently and encouraging children to do the same.

Children will probably want to know why they need to wash their hands. Explain that microbes can make people sick even though they are too tiny to be seen.

Point out fingernails, lines, cracks and wrinkles on hands where dirt and microbes like to hide. Explain that all these places should be washed carefully.

Show children the right way to wash their hands as explained in these guidelines.





How to wash hands to make them clean

When we wash our hands correctly we reduce the chances of getting sick. Washing hands help us stay healthy.

Here's how to wash hands:

- Use warm water and soap to create a sudsy lather on your hands.
- Rub hands together for about half a minute.
- Wash hands thoroughly. Be sure the soap suds get in between fingers and around finger nails.
- Rinse the suds off your hands with warm water.
- Finally, dry hands completely on clean paper towels or your own personal towel. Cloth towels that others have used may spread illnesses.

When should we wash our hands?

Be sure you and children in your care wash hands with soap and warm water at these times:

- before** preparing and eating food,
- after** handling raw meat, fish, poultry or eggs,
- after** touching pets,
- after** playing in dirt or sand or with shared toys,
- after** using bathroom facilities,
- after** changing diapers,
- after** blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing on your hands,
- after** touching a cut or open sore.

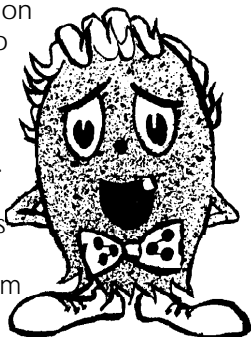
Warning

Children should be watched carefully so that they do not burn their hands under hot running water. To avoid a possibly unsafe situation, turn hot water heater to 120° F, or between low and medium.

Microbes* spread easily

Microbes can live on dry surfaces for hours and on moist surfaces for up to three days. Hands are often warm and moist — they're a great place for microbes to live.

Hands help microbes to move from one surface to another and from one person to another.



What are *microbes?

Microbes (short for micro-organisms) include many bacteria, viruses and parasites. Often called germs, many different kinds of microbes can make people sick.

Microbes are everywhere

Although they can only be seen through a microscope, microbes are part of our daily lives.

Billions of microbes grow and live on and in our bodies every day. Some are even necessary for good health. Most microbes grow best in warm, moist places. They like to live in people's mouths, noses, intestinal tracts and on hands. They cling to hair and hide under fingernails and in the small folds of our skin.

Prevent spreading microbes by handling food safely and following guides for washing hands.

Start washing hands the right way, today

Remember washing hands helps stop the spread of illnesses. Keep in mind:

- Microbes are everywhere.
- Microbes like to live on unclean hands.
- Good hand washing habits decrease your chance for illness.



Clean hands for healthy children is the first in a five-part program on *Safe Food for Children: A series of lessons for parents and child care providers.*

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