



34. Handwashing with soap

Last update: 2022-09-14

Overview

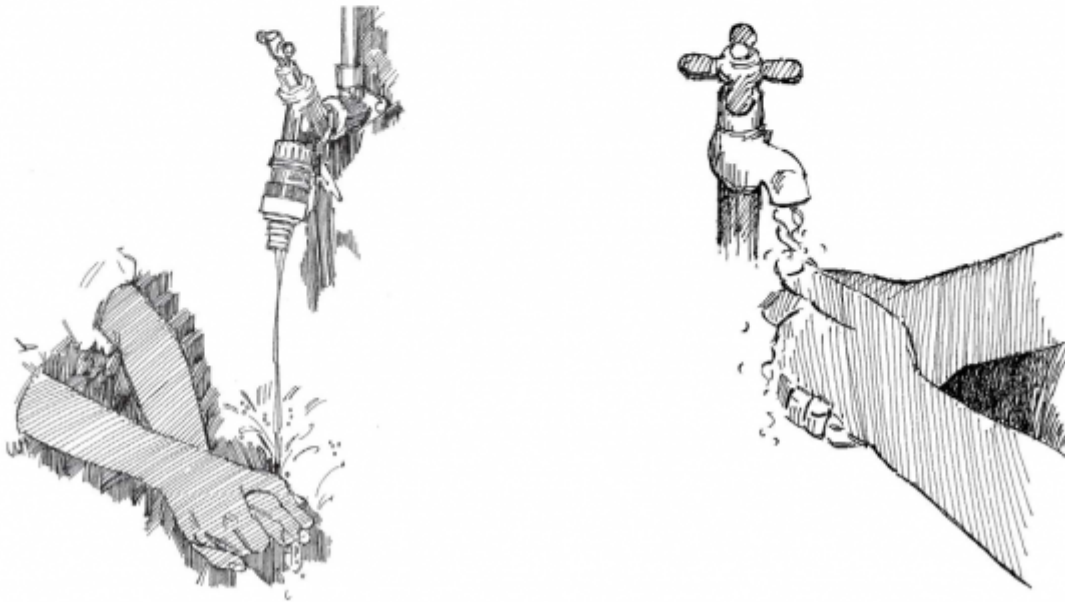
- Washing your hands is one of the most important ways to prevent the spread of many epidemics, especially diarrhoeal diseases.
- Handwashing is easy and everyone (including children) can do it.
- To be able to wash their hands, people need running water, liquid soap or ash, and paper towels.

When to wash hands

Wash your hands BEFORE:	Wash your hands AFTER:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preparing or eating food.• Treating a wound (yours or someone else's).• Caring for someone who is ill.• Breastfeeding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using the toilet.• Washing or changing a baby or infant.• Coughing or sneezing.• Caring for someone who is ill.• Coming into contact with a sick person in an epidemic (see Action tool Handwashing in a highly infectious epidemic).• Handling raw meat.• Contact with animals (including pets).• Handling rubbish or anything that might be contaminated.

How to wash hands

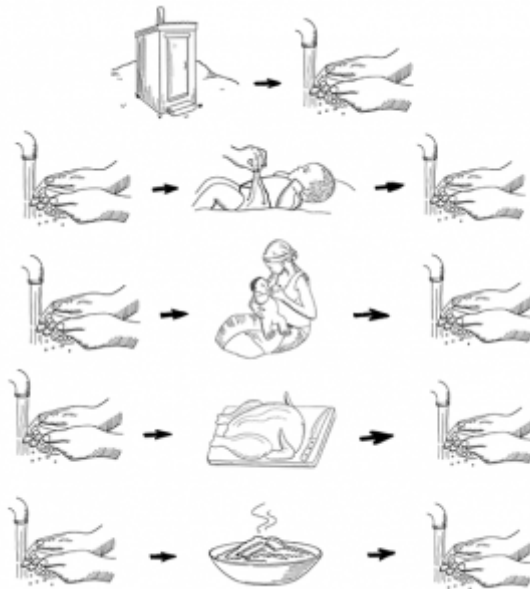
- Wet your hands and rub them with soap or ash.
- Rub all parts of your hands together for 10 to 15 seconds.
- Use lots of force (push your hands together hard) and remember to wash all surfaces, including the backs of the hands and between the fingers.
- Rinse hands well so they are free of soap or ash.
- Dry hands with a paper towel. If there is no towel, wave them in the air until they are dry.



Community messages



08. Washing hands with soap



09. When to wash hands