



# Hand hygiene:

## Guidance for communities

The COVID-19 virus primarily spreads through droplet and contact transmission. Contact transmission means by touching infected people and/or contaminated objects or surfaces. Thus, your hands can spread the virus to other surfaces and/or to your mouth, nose or eyes if you touch them.

- Hand Hygiene is one of the most effective actions you can take to reduce the spread of pathogens and prevent infections, including the COVID-19 virus.
  - Community members can play a critical role in fighting COVID-19 by adopting frequent hand hygiene as part of their day-to-day practices.
  - You should wash your hands:
    - After coughing or sneezing, even when you use tissue paper
    - Anytime you come from outside and before touching anything in your home
    - Before eating, either at home or outside
    - After visiting the toilet or public places
    - After using public transport
    - After looking after or touching a sick person
    - When your hands are visibly dirty
    - When you have touched dirty or contaminated surfaces
  - Hand washing should be done with soap and water for 40 to 60 seconds.
  - If soap and water are not available, hand-rub can be conducted for 20-30 seconds with hand sanitizer that has at least 60% alcohol and is certified.
  - Community members should encourage hand washing and have hand washing stands at schools, restaurants, and other public places.
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