



**Antimicrobial Resistance
and Infection Control Team**

Partner Pack: World Hand Hygiene Day 5th May 2022

Hand Hygiene Day 5th May

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What is RESIST hand hygiene programme?

Merchandise and Materials

www.hse.ie/infectioncontrol

#HandHygiene



Background

Clean hands save lives and stop the spread of many infections

5th May is designated World Health Organization Hand Hygiene Day. Cleaning hands regularly is one of the most effective ways of stopping the spread of COVID-19 as well as many common infections. Bacteria and microorganisms are on all surfaces with the exception of very recently decontaminated surfaces in clinical areas. Regular, correct hand hygiene is one of the most important and simple things that we can do to protect our health, the health of our families and service users.

Hands will pick up germs (bacteria and viruses), and even though they may appear to be clean, the germs will be there. Unfortunately we cannot see them with the naked eye. These germs can be easily removed by good hand hygiene. Staff have to practice good hand hygiene when providing healthcare. Visitors to a healthcare or social care setting can bring infections with them without being aware of it. It is important that everyone is aware of the importance of hand hygiene (either washing or alcohol gel).

Who are the primary target audiences?

- ❖ Parents of young children
- ❖ Older people
- ❖ Healthcare staff
- ❖ Patients/service users
- ❖ Key partners (ICGP, Colleges, IPU, IDA)
- ❖ Department of Health
- ❖ Media

How can you help?

We are asking for your support, to promote World Hand Hygiene day and to direct people to our www.hse.ie/handhygiene web pages. We would appreciate if you would share/comment on our videos and social media posts (twitter calendar is listed below).

There are three ways you can support us:

Messaging – It is valuable to share consistent messages, and our communications team have created some videos, images and social media posts that encapsulate some key points:

- Hand hygiene is not just for COVID-19; it's for life
- Effective hand hygiene plays a key role in reducing infection including COVID-19 and other infections.
- Good hand hygiene is one of the greatest protections for our health and the health of our families
- On world hand hygiene day (5 May), the focus for healthcare staff should be on prevention of infection in health care.

Media – Contained in this pack are examples of content which can be tweeted or posted on the day of launch and the following months.

Members – Please let your members, colleagues or staff know about www.hse.ie/handhygiene and the communications materials that are available.

Internal Communications (HSE staff)

A new Hand Hygiene page will go live on the HSE [staff pages](#) on 5th May. On World Hand Hygiene day there will be a staff broadcast to HSE staff with information and links to the new content and videos.

Media Relations

If you do not have access to a clinical spokesperson, the HSE can provide a spokesperson to support the media campaign.

Social media

We welcome your support in promoting the key messages of the campaign by tweeting or retweeting, posting or sharing and engaging with the social media campaign. There are tweets listed below and these will commence on Tuesday 3rd May and will run for an average of 2 tweets per day until Tuesday 10th May. The [new video](#) and stills will be used throughout the week. If you want copies of the social media images please contact Hcai.Amrteam@hse.ie

Please show your support by sharing content on:
Hashtag: #HandHygiene
Twitter handle: @HSELive

New social media graphics



Social Media Suggested Content

<p>Today is #WorldHandHygieneDay. Cleaning your hands is the easiest way to avoid infections including #COVID19. Watch our video to learn how to clean your hands properly.</p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Xx1gyT41P9o</p>
<p>Fact: human hands can carry millions of bacteria – most are good a few are harmful. Are you cleaning your hands correctly? Cleaning your hands is the easiest way to avoid infections including COVID-19 #HandHygiene</p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Xx1gyT41P9o</p>
<p>Clean hands are the easiest way to avoid infections including COVID19. The most important times to clean your hands are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when you get home • after preparing food • before eating food • after using the toilet • after being in contact with a sick person <p>#HandHygiene</p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Xx1gyT41P9o</p>
<p>Did you know? Cleaning your hands is one of the best ways to prevent picking up infections, including COVID19. You can use soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitiser. #HandHygiene</p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Xx1gyT41P9o</p>
<p>Surfaces that look clean can be home to billions of bacteria - cleaning your hands is the best way to avoid getting infection #HandHygiene</p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Xx1gyT41P9o</p>
<p>It's easy to pick up diseases and infection, so be sure to practice proper hand hygiene. Viruses are the most abundant biological entities on Earth: There are an estimated 10 quintillion viruses on earth. #HandHygiene</p>	<p>https://bit.ly/2J6vCyX</p>
<p>The simplest way to keep you and your family safe from infection is to clean your hands regularly. Are you doing it right? Take a look at our video to find out #HandHygiene</p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Xx1gyT41P9o</p>
<p>This Wednesday, May 5th, join us in marking #HandHygieneDay. Clean hands means cutting infection risk and being mindful of our health and our community health #HandHygiene</p>	<p>https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Xx1gyT41P9o</p>
<p>If you want to teach your children about the importance of hand hygiene, e-bug.eu is a great resource for tips on how to keep your hands clean. #HandHygiene</p>	<p>https://www.e-bug.eu/</p>
<p>Ebug is a great resource for children, parents and teachers who want to learn more about the importance of hand hygiene. #HandHygiene</p>	<p>https://www.e-bug.eu/</p>
<p>How clean are your hands? Take a look at our hand hygiene video to find out #HandHygiene</p>	<p>https://bit.ly/2J6vCyX</p>

Fun facts on bacteria and viruses

Older than any other life form

Bacteria have been on the planet for more than 3.5 billion years old, making them the oldest known life-form on earth (so far).

They're fast

A bacterium can typically move about 100 times its body length in a second. To put that into perspective, a large fish can move only about 10 times its body length in the same time.

You eat it

That bread you ate this morning? That's made with bacteria. Many foods like yogurt, cheese, and miso are all made with bacteria – and don't forget beer!

Most are good

Your body has way more bacterial cells than human cells. We need bacteria to aid digestion and they help defend us against harmful bacteria.

They go for light years

Lined up from end to end, bacteria would stretch out around 10 billion light years. That's the distance from here to the edge of the universe.

Discovered in 1674

No one knew bacteria existed until 1674, when Dutch scientist Antonie van Leeuwenhoek spotted them as he was looking at scrapings from the human mouth under a newly invented microscope.

They adapt fast

Bacteria adapt quickly, making it hard to find an antibiotic that will work consistently against harmful bacteria. If you take antibiotics too often, bacteria can become resistant to the antibiotic. This means that antibiotics no longer work on the bacteria and can't help you fight an infection.

They're single-celled

Each bacterium (single bacteria) is only one simple cell but they can multiply fast. Bacteria can double every 4 – 20 minutes depending on the type, that's trillions in a day.

Unique shape

Bacteria are most frequently shaped like a sphere, rod, or spiral. Some bacteria can change their appearance, and can be shaped like a comma or corkscrew; they can have 'tails' or double tails and can look like artwork when viewed under an electron-microscope.

They're tough

Different bacteria can survive in a variety of extreme conditions. From ice to hot springs, and even radioactive waste, there are very few places that are bacteria free on this planet.

Are they zombies?

Viruses are not alive; they are inanimate complex organic matter. Viruses must rely on a host for energy production, reproduction, and survival

They're everywhere

Viruses are the most abundant biological entities on Earth: There are an estimated 10 quintillion viruses on earth, making them the most abundant form of life on the planet.

Campaign Videos



<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Xx1gyT41P9o>



VIDEO LINK - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apV7iYRqfxo>



VIDEO LINK - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PmVJQUcm4E>

Hand hygiene: let's keep the habit

Wednesday the 5th of May marks the World Health Organization's Hand Hygiene Day around the world.

Dr Eimear Brannigan, HSE Clinical Lead for Antibiotic Resistance and Infection Control says, "Most years when Hand Hygiene Day comes around we try to think of ways to talk to people about the importance of hand hygiene in preventing infection. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we all understand that hand hygiene has had a major part to play in all our lives."

"We know that since the COVID-19 pandemic a lot of people are very aware of the importance of hand hygiene and are cleaning their hands regularly. Many viruses and bugs can't get through your skin but if the bug is on your hand when you put your hand to your eye, mouth or nose you can catch infection. This is why hand hygiene plays an important part in stopping the spread of COVID-19 infection, as well as preventing many other infections that are still out there."

Department of Health research undertaken throughout the pandemic shows that 96% of people washed their hands more often as a result of COVID-19. Importantly, 90% of people say that they will continue to clean their hands frequently. However we also know that people tend to go back to their old habits when a crisis starts to get better so it is vitally important that we all understand that hand hygiene is not just for COVID-19 it's for life.

"I would encourage any shops, education facilities, hospitality services to keep up the good work in relation to hand hygiene. Having sanitiser and access to hand washing facilities will make it easier for staff, students and customers to maintain their good hand hygiene habits."

Dr. Edel Doorley, a Dublin based GP and AMRIC team member says, "All GPs have seen a decrease in the numbers of people who are suffering from respiratory infections. We have had very few flu infections compared to the winters before COVID-19. Many parents will identify with the fact that their young children have not had the 6 - 10 viral illnesses they normally get every year. Hand hygiene plays a major part in this. We want people to keep on going with their hand hygiene, help your [children to learn](#) good hand hygiene and help us to stop the spread of COVID-19 and other infections."

Have a look at the [video](#) on proper hand washing. We often think we have washed our hands properly but have a look at this [short experiment](#) and you will be surprised.

Tips for stopping infections spreading at home

The goal is to find a good balance between keeping your hands clean when it's most important without limiting your enjoyment of life. Particularly important times to wash your hand are:

- If you were in contact with someone who has COVID-19, a fever or respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing)
- Before and after visiting someone in a hospital or residential setting
- When you have been in contact with a person or an animal with an infection
- When you get back to your home from being out and about or at work, especially if your work involves a lot of contact with people or animals
- Before starting to prepare or handle food
- After touching raw meat including poultry
- Before eating food
- After using the toilet and after changing nappies
- Before and after being in a crowd (especially an indoor crowd)
- After touching animals or animal waste

Regular use of a hand moisturiser will protect your hands from the drying effects of hand hygiene products. If you have dry skin or a skin condition, apply moisturiser after washing and drying your hands.

Be wary of the technology...

Computers, phones and mobiles are a constant in lives, we can't work without them. But how clean are they? Research has shown that PCs, keyboards, phones are full of bacteria – a mouse has an average of 260 bacteria per centimetre squared, a keyboard has 511 and the mouthpiece of a telephone has an impressive 3,895! Make sure you clean your tech equipment even if you are working from home during the COVID19 pandemic. And remember to clean your hands.

The toilet is fine - but watch out for the handles, taps and air hand dryers...

The real danger is not the toilet but the handles and taps. Don't touch the toilet seat with your hands if it's visibly dirty. Our skin acts as a protective barrier when we use the toilet - it is the largest organ in the human body. Drying your hands with paper towel will reduce the bacterial count by 45 – 60% on your hands. However, using some hand dryers can increase the bacteria on your hands by up to 255% because they can blow out bacteria already living in the, conveniently, warm moist environment.

Get more information

There are lots of tips on hand hygiene on www.hse.ie/handhygiene and you can learn all about bacteria on www.e-bug.eu a teaching/ learning resource for schools and colleges (and parents!). On ebug you can find out about bugs through quizzes, games and home science experiments. Try them out – you'll be surprised

RESIST materials

A number of HSE branded materials for use in promoting Hand Hygiene Day 2022 in community services and hospitals have been distributed to HSE PC leads. These materials are part of the HSE RESIST programme that is being rolled out in HSE hospitals and community services.



Washable wall vinyls



HSE Media and Campaign Contacts

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