



MAINTAINING GOOD HAND HYGIENE FOR COMMUNITIES WITHOUT ACCESS TO PIPED WATER



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Why must we wash our hands?

Washing our hands with soap and water and cleaning our hands with a sanitiser can help stop the spread of COVID-19, the deadly new disease caused by the new Coronavirus. Since we use our hands to eat and touch our faces, they are one of the main ways in which the new Coronavirus can enter our bodies. So, keeping our hands clean by maintaining good hand hygiene is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of the disease.



When must we wash our hands?

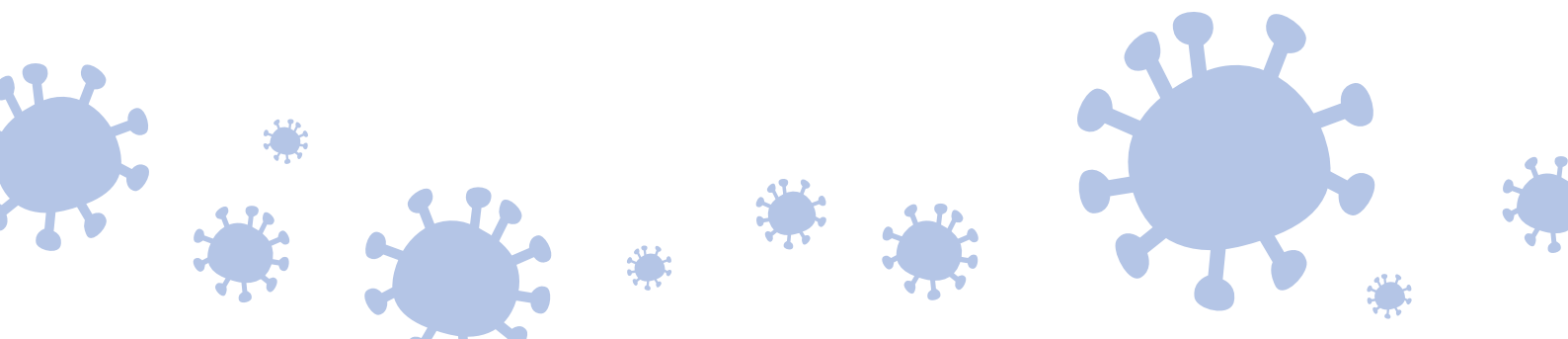
- After fetching water and before handling drinking water
- Before and after preparing food
- Before we eat any food or feed children
- After using the toilet
- After changing nappies or coming into contact with urine or faeces
- After handling animals
- Before and after giving care to a sick person
- After wiping or blowing nose
- After contact with blood or any bodily fluid.

How to wash hands

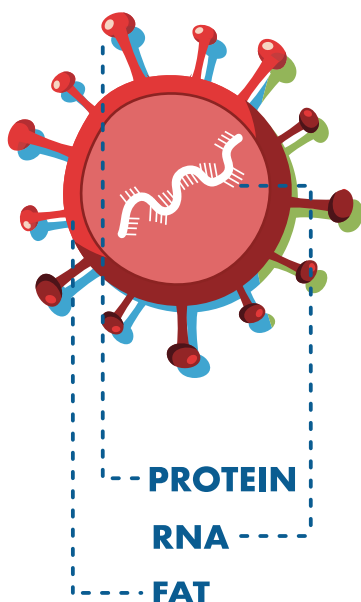


Wet your hands and wash thoroughly with soap for 20 seconds. Use a nail brush to clean under your nails if they are very dirty.

Dispose the dirty wastewater after every wash. Do not dispose wastewater on food gardens or lawns, dispose it in a soakaway pit in your yard.



Why soap and water?



Wash with soap and water

Water helps to wash off any visible particles of dirt on our hands. Washing with warm water helps even more, because it removes oils in which germs can hide.

Using soap (any regular soap) is important because soap consists of chemicals that have the ability to destroy viruses and other germs that may cause disease. Soap works so effectively because it dissolves the outer layer (envelope) of the new Coronavirus, causing the virus to fall apart. Making sure that the soap reaches every nook and cranny of our hands ensures that all the fragments of the virus are trapped in soap molecules. A good rinse with running water will wash them off.

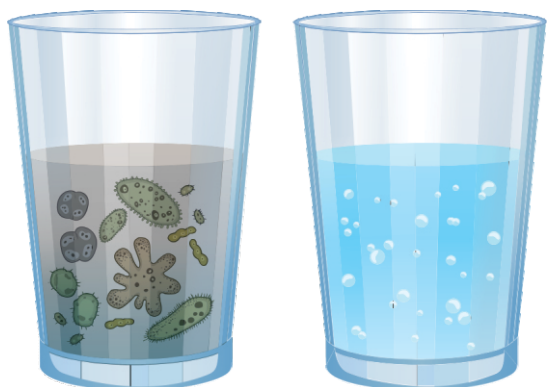
This process requires at least 20 seconds, that is why it is important to wash our hands for 20 seconds.

Note:

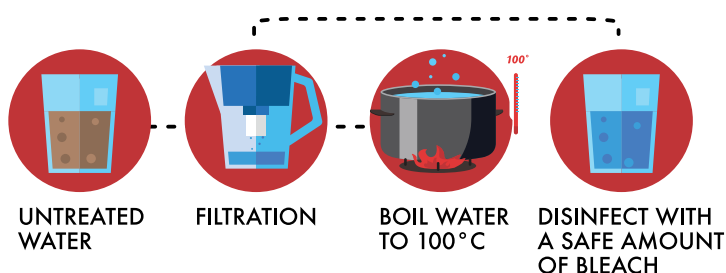
Washing hands in a shared basin (or bowl) is not advisable because it will lead to sharing germs. It is important that we use clean running water to wash and rinse our hands.



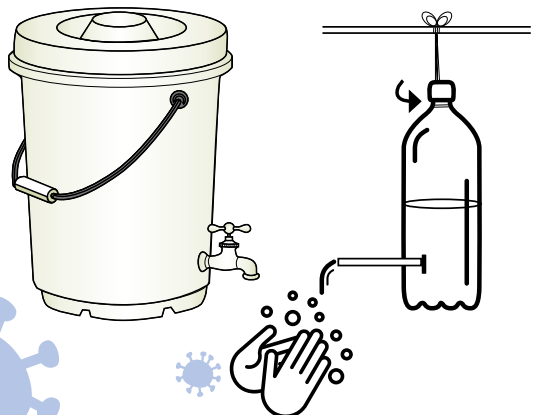
How to make water clean and safe for use?



- Filter the water through a clean cotton cloth if the water is dirty to remove any solids
- Disinfect the water by:
 - o Boiling - boiling it for at least 1 minute and let it cool naturally and store it in clean containers with covers OR
 - o Solar disinfection - exposing clear filtered water to sunlight for 6 hours or 2 days if cloudy OR
 - o Disinfection using bleach - adding about 1/2 teaspoon (about 3 millilitres) of household unscented liquid bleach, such as Jik™ to 15 litres of clear (filtered) water. Mix well and wait 30 minutes or more before use.



What you need



- A plastic bucket with a lid and a tap OR a water can with a tap, which can be purchased from local supermarkets OR make your own tippy tap Basin to collect wastewater
- Soap

Clean with a hand sanitiser



Using hand sanitiser

If soap and water are not available and your hands are not visibly dirty, you can clean and disinfect your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that can be purchased from your local supermarket. Rub the hand sanitiser into your hands using the same hand movements as for handwashing. Air dry your hands.

The hand sanitiser must contain at least 60 to 70% alcohol. Hand sanitisers with a 60 to 70% alcohol content destroy the new Coronavirus by breaking apart its outer layer. Check the label for the percentage alcohol.

Some products refer to ethanol instead of alcohol. It is not advisable to use a product with more than 70% alcohol as it could end up severely damaging the skin. If hands are visibly dirty, always wash with soap and water. Hand sanitiser is not effective on dirty hands because alcohol does not penetrate dirt well.

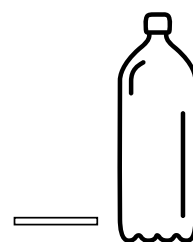


Make your tippy tap. Just follow these instructions

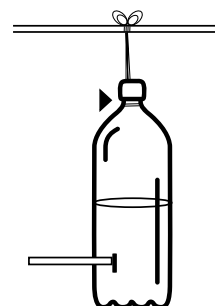
To make this tippy-tap you need:

- A plastic bottle with a screw-on cap, of the sort that soda drinks come in, and
- the inside tube from a ball-point pen, or some other small, stiff, hollow tube

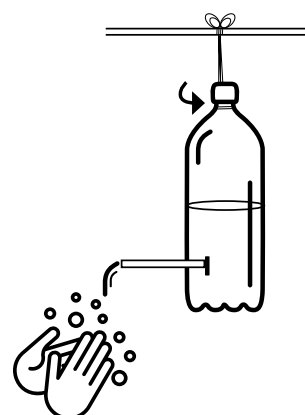
1. Clean the bottle
2. Using a heated piece of wire, make a small hole in the lower part of the bottle
3. Remove and clean the inside tube from a ball-point pen. Cut it off at an angle, and push it through the hole in the bottle. The tube should fit tightly



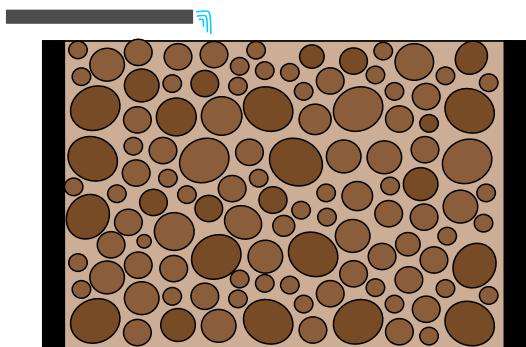
4. Fill the bottle with water and replace the cap. When the cap is tight, no water should flow through the tube. When the cap is loose, water should flow out in a steady stream. When you are sure that it works, hang it or place it on a shelf where people can use it for hand-washing. Keep soap nearby, or thread a bar of soap with string and tie it to the bottle.



5. To use the tippy-tap: Loosen the cap just enough to let water flow. Wet your hands, add soap, and rub your hands together under the water until they are clean



How to make a soakaway pit for your wastewater



A soakaway pit is a simple structure made by digging into the ground, and then lined or filled with gravel stones. The stones in the soakaway pit allows the dirty water (greywater) to drain into the surrounding soil and minimises our contact with the dirty water.

In order, not to contaminate groundwater sources, the soakaway pit must be dug at least 1.5 m between the bottom of the infiltration system and the groundwater table, and the system should be at least 30 m from any groundwater source. Soakaway pits also prevent the formation of mud holes and puddles at the top.

To make the soakaway pit, make hole, about, 40x40cm and 20cm deep, under the tippy tap, where the used water will fall. Fill hole with rocks. The soakaway pit should be checked weekly, and cleaned (if necessary) to ensure that the systems operates correctly.

It is important to put a fence around the pit if there are young children in the yard.

How must you clean and disinfect the water container?



- Wash the container every day with hot water and soap.
- To disinfect the container, mix 2 tablespoons (25 millilitres) of Jik™ or another type of bleach with one litre of clean water. Wet a clean cloth and wipe the surfaces. Leave to dry.
- **Important:** Don't mix any other cleanser (like Handy Andy™) into the bleach water.

References



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For more information



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