

# POLICY MANUAL

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**Subject:** Hand Washing

**Effective Date:** 10/90

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**Initiated By:** Cinde Stewart Freeman  
Associate Clinical Director

**Approved By:** William C. Anderson  
Medical Director

**Review Dates:** 2/97 CSF; 2/98 CSF;  
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## POLICY:

Hand washing is the single most important procedure preventing nosocomial infections. Cumberland heights adopts the hand washing measure delineated in the CDC Document entitled "Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Nosocomial Infections" incorporated here in its entirety by reference.

## PROCEDURE:

1. In the absence of a true emergency, personnel should wash their hands with soap and water:
  - A. Before performing invasive procedures;
  - B. Before taking care of particularly susceptible patients (i.e. immune compromised);
  - C. Before and after treating wounds;
  - D. After situations during which microbial contamination of the hands is likely (i.e. any contact with blood or body fluids, mucous membranes, secretions, or excretions);
  - E. After touching inanimate sources likely to be contaminated with microorganisms (i.e. urine or secretion collection devices);
  - F. After taking care of an infected patient;
  - G. Between contacts with different patients in high risk areas.
  - H. After removing gloves
  - I. When moving from a contaminated body site to a clean body site.
  - J. After smoking.
  - K. Before eating and after using the bathroom.
  - L. Before, during and after food is prepared.

**\*\* NOTE:** The use of gloves does not eliminate the need for hand hygiene.

2. Correct hand washing technique involves the following: Wet hands and apply designated soap. Rub hands together vigorously and scrub all surfaces. Continue for at least 15 seconds. Rinse well and dry hands. Use towel to turn off faucet.
3. Liquid soap dispensers are generally used and are cleaned and filled with fresh product when empty. Liquids are not added to a partially full dispenser.
4. Sinks are located throughout the facilities with an increased concentration located in the detoxification area.
5. Alcohol based hand rubs and antimicrobial impregnated wipes are located in designated areas throughout the facility. When using the alcohol-based hand rub, product should be applied to palm of one hand and hands rubbed together, covering all surfaces of hands and fingers until hands are dry.
6. Artificial fingernails or extenders are discouraged. Natural nail tips should be less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch long.
7. Personnel are educated annually regarding hand-hygiene practices.