



Ambulatory Clinic Policy and Procedure

Title: HAND HYGIENE	Policy Number: EP 7.16
Regulation CDC, APIC Reference:	Effective Date: 06/2017

Policy Statement:

It is the policy of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) to maintain a safe environment for patients, visitors, and employees by preventing transmission of infections through the use of proper hand hygiene techniques.

Scope and Distribution:

This policy applies and will be distributed to all TTUHSC El Paso ambulatory clinics.

Procedure:

1. Basic Hand Washing (soap and water):
 - a. Wash hands with soap and water when:
 - 1) Hands are visibly soiled (dirty).
 - 2) Hands are visibly contaminated with blood or body fluids.
 - 3) After removing gloves.
 - 4) Before and after eating.
 - 5) After using restroom.
 - 6) Before and after having contact with a patient, performing an invasive procedure, or manipulating and invasive device (e.g. Foley Catheter, Port-A-Cath).
 - b. How to wash hands effectively with soap and water:
 - 1) Wet hands first with warm (avoid HOT) water.
 - 2) Apply 3 to 5 ml (about the size of a quarter) of soap approved by the Office of Occupational Health to hands.
 - 3) Rub hands together and in between fingers for at least 15 seconds.
 - 4) Cover all surfaces of the hand, fingers and under finger nails with soap using friction.
 - 5) Rinse hands with water and dry thoroughly.
 - 6) Use paper towels after drying hand to turn off faucet.
2. When alcohol based hand rubs should be used:
 - a. Alcohol base hand wash should be available in every patient care area of each clinic and used whenever soap and water wash is impractical.
 - 1) Before having direct contact with a patient,
 - 2) After having direct contact with a patient's skin,
 - 3) After having direct contact with body fluids, wounds or broken skin,
 - 4) After touching computer equipment, medical equipment, or furniture near the patient,
 - 5) After removing gloves.
 - b. How to effectively use alcohol based hand rubs:



Ambulatory Clinic Policy and Procedure

- 1) Apply 1.5 to 3 ml (about the size of quarter) of alcohol rub approved by the Office of Occupational Health to the palm of the hand and rub together or follow manufacturer’s instructions.
- 2) Cover all surfaces of your hands and fingers including areas around/under fingernails.
- 3) Rub hands together until alcohol dries. Make sure hands are completely dry prior to putting on gloves.
- 4) Wash hands with soap and water when you feel a “build up” of emollients on your hands.

3. Hand Moisturizing:

- a. Frequent and repeated use of hand hygiene products such as hand soaps and alcohol based hand rubs may dry the skin and potentially cause the skin to break. It is important to prevent the breaking of the skin, which increases the risk of exposure to pathogens, by keeping skin moisturized.
- b. Only hand lotions that have been approved by the TTUHSC El Paso Office of Occupational Health may be used in the clinics. No unapproved lotions are to be kept in any clinical area.

4. Fingernails:

- a. Personnel engaged in patient care may not wear artificial nails (i.e. includes, but is not limited to, acrylic, gel nails, tips, bondings, and extensions). Fingernails should be kept clean and no longer than ¼ inch from fingertip in length. Gemstones, stickers, or any other “3-D” decorative additions may not be worn. For more information, see EP Policy 9.11 Clinical Personnel Dress Code.

References

- 1- MMWR 51(16):1-46. Retrieved May 8, 2017 from CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5116a1.htm>
- 2- World Health Organization: Hand Hygiene: Why, How & When? Retrieved May 8, 2017 from WHO: http://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/Hand_Hygiene_Why_How_and_When_Brochure.pdf

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