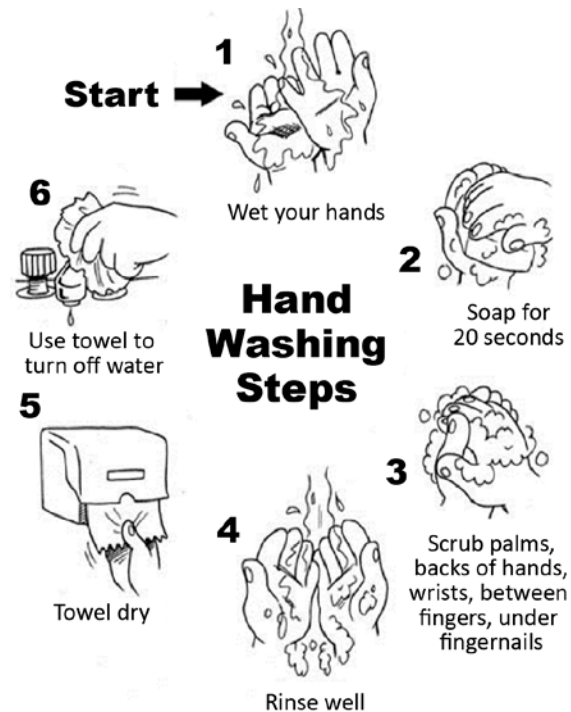


## How You Can Help

To help prevent the spread of infections:

- Wash your hands or use hand gel before and after you use the bathroom, eat, or leave your room.
- Ask about handwashing whenever a staff person is ready to touch you or any devices used for your care.
- Talk with your nurse or charge nurse if you have questions about infections that can occur in a hospital.

Thank you for your help!



### Questions?

Your questions are important. Talk with your nurse or charge nurse if you have questions or concerns.

## UW Medicine

HARBORVIEW  
MEDICAL CENTER

### Infection Prevention and Control

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## Preventing Infections At Harborview Medical Center



At Harborview Medical Center (HMC), we are committed to patient safety. One of our safety goals is to prevent the spread of infections between patients, visitors, and staff.

To prevent infections at HMC, doctors, nurses, Environmental Services staff, and other members of your care team all work together. As members of your care team, you and your family play a vital role in meeting this goal.

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Follow these 6 steps to wash your hands.

In healthcare settings, germs can be found on hands and on surfaces. One of the best ways to prevent the spread of infections is for everyone to wash their hands well. We ask all HMC staff, patients, and families to commit to washing their hands.



## Standard Precautions

HMC staff use *standard precautions* when caring for patients. This means that:

- We wash our hands with soap and water or use hand gel when we enter and leave your room. We do this again before touching each patient and any equipment used in patient care.
- Your doctor and nurse will wear gloves for many procedures. They may wear a mask or gown when doing some special procedures.
- We work closely with Environmental Services (housekeeping) staff to make sure your room is kept clean.

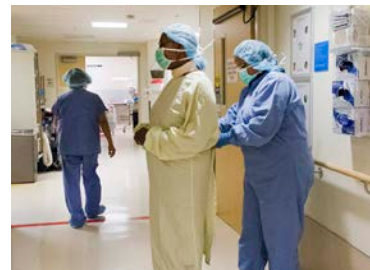
## Contact Precautions

A patient sometimes needs extra measures to help prevent infection. These are called *contact precautions*. If you are in contact precautions, we:

- Wear a gown and gloves when we enter your room.
- Ask you to stay in your room, unless you need to leave your room for a medical test.
- Ask you to wash your hands and put on a clean hospital gown when you leave your room for a test.
- Ask your visitors:
  - To wear a gown and gloves.
  - To leave their belongings outside your room.
  - Not to eat or drink in your room.

If you are in contact precautions, be sure to follow these steps. They will help keep everyone healthy and prevent the spread of infections.

These contact precautions are advised by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Please talk with your nurse or charge nurse if you have any questions or comments.



## Shared Rooms

Infection Prevention and Control staff and the nursing supervisor for each unit work together to assign rooms. Rarely, a patient who needs extra precautions is placed in a room with a patient who does not need them.

If this happens, we will work quickly to change rooms for one of the patients.

## For Visitors

- Wash or gel your hands every time you enter and leave a patient room.
- Cover your mouth when you cough.
- Wash your hands after coughing or sneezing.
- If your loved one is in an *isolation room*, you must wear protective gear, such as a mask, gloves, and gown. Please read the sign on the door or wall.
- Leave young children at home, if you can. Children can pick up infections very easily.
- If you are not sure if a staff person has washed or used gel when they entered your loved one's room, please speak up. Remind them to wash their hands, or ask them to wash again.