

# Hand-Washing: Make It a Habit

## Information for Parents

Today, your son or daughter learned about hand-washing through the “Hand-Washing Kits for Kids” program made available by Northwestern Medicine. Be sure to ask your child to explain to you what he or she learned about keeping his or her hands clean.

Hand-washing is one of the most important health practice for preventing the spread of germs that can cause colds, flu and other infections. To promote health in your own family, be sure to always encourage hand-washing.

---

**REMEMBER** Your child should **ALWAYS** wash hands:

---

Before eating, unloading the dishwasher or setting the table

After a visit to the bathroom

After coughing, sneezing or blowing his or her nose

---

Teachers should encourage children to wash their hands at school. For students it’s particularly important to wash hands prior to eating lunch or snacks. If this is difficult, you can include an individual moist towelette or damp paper towel (with a small amount of soap applied) in your child’s lunch bag. By using them with vigorous motion, these substitutes can approach the effectiveness of hand-washing.

Using hand lotion on a daily basis can help keep skin from cracking and opening up avenues for infection. Developing good hand-washing habits can play a big role in family wellness.

---

### THE CORRECT METHOD TO WASH HANDS:

---

Use warm running water and liquid soap whenever possible.

Rub hands vigorously together, getting between fingers and on all surfaces.

Scrub underneath fingernails.

Everyone should wash for 15 to 20 seconds, or as long as it takes to sing the ABC’s.

Rinse and dry thoroughly.

---

**To learn more and watch videos about proper handwashing, visit [cdc.gov/handwashing](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing)**