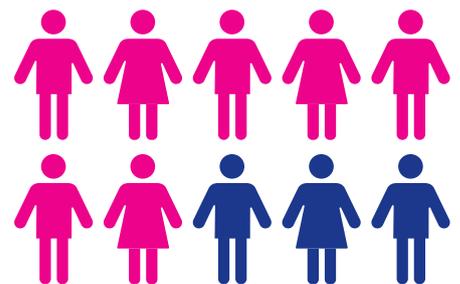


The power to heal the world is (literally) in your own hands

Hands are powerful tools for connection, enabling us to express our love for family and friends, make new acquaintances and care for people in need. But when our hands get dirty, they risk being transformed from tools for connection into tools for spreading germs.

The global Essentials Initiative Survey 2018 survey, conducted by Essity, shows that people around the world are increasingly concerned about the hostile side of our hands. Four in ten people often or always worry about becoming ill due to poor hygiene¹, seven in ten have refrained from everyday activities such as traveling on public transportation or eating street food because of hygiene concerns², and two in ten often avoid physical contact with others due to hand hygiene worries³. But avoiding high fives, street food and crowded spaces is neither a particularly happy way of living nor a necessity for fighting off germs. In fact, there is an effective method for preventing the spread of germs and still lead active and social lives: simple handwashing with soap and drying with paper towels.

Seven in ten have refrained from everyday activities



Washing your hands with soap for thirty seconds and drying with paper towels removes up to 90% of transient flora, such as bacteria and viruses. It is a simple act for keeping your hands clean – and clean hands are a recipe for health, well-being and public progress.

1000

children's lives could be saved each day by proper hand hygiene

Clean hands save the lives of millions of children

Infectious diseases such as diarrhea and pneumonia threaten the lives of millions of children every year, particularly in developing countries. Luckily, there are interventions that can significantly prevent these diseases – and handwashing is a highly effective one. Safe hand hygiene could spare one out of three children who get sick with diarrhea⁴, and almost one out of five who get respiratory infections like pneumonia. In fact, clean hands can prevent almost 1000 children from dying due to pneumonia or diarrhea – every day⁵.

1. Essity Hygiene and Health Report 2018-2019

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

4. R. Ejemot-Nwadiaro et al., 'Hand washing for preventing diarrhoea', Cochrane Database Systematic Reviews, 2008, (1):CD004265; AE. Aiello et al., 'Effect of hand hygiene on infectious disease risk in the community setting: a meta-analysis', The American Journal of Public Health, vol. 98, no. 8, 2008, pp. 1372-1381.

5. T. Rabie & V. Curtis, 'Handwashing and risk of respiratory infections: a quantitative systematic review', Tropical Medicine & International Health, vol. 11, no. 3, 2006, pp. 258-267.

6. 1/3 diarrheal caused and 1/5 pneumonia caused child deaths could be prevented by safe hand hygiene (Essity Hygiene and Health Report 2018-2019). 2500 childhood deaths due to pneumonia per day and 1400 due to diarrhea per day (One is too many: Ending child deaths from pneumonia and diarrhoea, Unicef). Calculation: 2500/5 = 500, and 1400/3 = 467.

Clean hands enable people to stay healthy and happy

Regular washing with soap and drying with paper towels also has a large impact in situations where infections are not life-threatening. Common diseases and illnesses that negatively affects personal health and well-being, such as the common cold, influenza and foodborne illness, can be effectively prevented by proper hand hygiene. Washing your hands can also have a positive psychological impact on people around you, according to a new global survey conducted by Essity. Four in ten say they would feel more comfortable if they knew that other people washed their hands properly, three in ten would feel more satisfied in life, and one in five say they would feel happier.

Clean hands enable children to spend more time in school

Pre-schools and schools can easily become playgrounds for infections. In fact, 242 million school days are missed globally every year due to diarrhea, thereby putting children at disadvantage early in life⁷. However, interventions to raise hygiene standards can prevent many infections and improve both children's health and school participation. By keeping hands clean in pre-schools and schools, absence rates among children can – depending on initial hygiene standard – be reduced by up to 54%⁸.

Let's unleash the power of your hands!

If clean hands can heal the world, then what can you do to unleash the power of your hands? First of all, you can decide once and for all to maintain proper hand hygiene, by carefully washing your hands with soap for 20-30 seconds at the critical moments defined by CDC and drying with paper towels. Although handwashing is not a very demanding act to perform, our data shows that there is still plenty of room for improvement. Globally, three in ten don't wash their hands before eating, more than two in ten don't wash their hands before cooking, and more than one in ten don't even wash their hands after visiting the toilet⁹.

Secondly, you can acknowledge and embrace the fact that your hands affect the people around you. Today, as many as eight in ten people worldwide say they wash their hands to protect themselves¹⁰, while only one in ten do it to protect others. But washing your hands is not only about improving your own health and well-being – it is also about improving the health and well-being of your loved ones.

No one can do everything, but everyone can do something. And if all of us regularly wash our hands for ourselves and for our loved ones, we can heal the world together.

When to wash your hands

- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- Before and after preparing food and eating
- After using the toilet or coming in contact with it.
- After touching a pet and handling its food
- Before and after caring for a sick person and treating a wound
- After touching garbage

How to wash your hands

1. Wash your hands with lukewarm water and soap
2. Scrub all sides, fingertips, fingernails and between your fingers – don't forget your thumbs
3. Continue for about 20-30 seconds
4. Rinse well
5. Dry well with a paper towel

8 in 10

say they wash their hands to protect themselves

1 in 10

say they wash their hands to protect others

7. Hutton, G. & Haller, L. (2004). Evaluation of the Costs and Benefits of Water and Sanitation Improvements at the Global Level. Retrieved from http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/wsh0404.pdf.

8. A. Bowen et al., 'A cluster-randomized controlled trial evaluating the effect of a handwashing-promotion program in Chinese primary schools', The American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, vol. 76, no. 6, 2007, pp. 1166-1173; M. Uhari & M. Möttönen, 'An open randomized controlled trial of infection prevention in child daycare centers', The Pediatric Infectious Disease Journal, vol. 18, no. 8, pp. 672-677; A. Lennell et al., 'Alcohol based hand disinfection reduced children's absence from Swedish day care centers', Acta Paediatrica, vol. 97, no. 12, 2008, pp. 1672-1680; Västra Götalandsregionen, HYFS Final report 2006-2012, 2014.; I. Nandrup-Bus, 'Håndvask i skoletiden nedsætter elevernes sygefravær', Sygeplejersken, no. 7, 2010, pp. 46-50.

9. Essentials Initiative Survey 2018

10. Power of Hands Survey 2018

