

TRUE OR FALSE?

Dry hands are **safe hands**



TRUE!

No matter how well you've washed your hands, if you haven't dried them completely, they are not safe!

Find out what you need to know - read more >>

Dry hands are safe hands

Studies carried out at the University of Auckland* have shown the number of disease-causing germs picked up and passed on by touch contact depends on how wet or damp your hands are.

Wet hands transfer up to 70,000 germs to items such as skin, food and utensils during brief contact. This number is reduced to a few hundred if the hands have been dried carefully. The risks of picking up and passing on viruses and other micro-organisms are high if the hands are wet or even damp. Good hand hygiene therefore is a matter of washing and drying the hands carefully. Hands need to be washed in a stream of running water with rubbing and dried with care. Surveys have shown that many users of

public rest room facilities take short cuts when washing and drying their hands.

Impatience and queue waiting to access hand drying equipment means that few users of rest room facilities dry their hands properly.

Using a warm air dryer, is an effective way of ensuring your hands are completely dry.

The bad press often ascribed to warm air dryers is due entirely to the fact that, in practice, they are used for just a fraction of the time needed to achieve dry hands.

The economics of hand drying

All methods of hand drying have their merits, however look at the economic, environmental, and socially acceptable advantages of warm air dryers.

- ✓ They are cost effective – no need to continually restock with paper towels or other drying products
- ✓ Reduction in litter and waste in comparison with paper towels, which cannot be recycled, therefore better for the environment
- ✓ No more piles of damp paper towels strewn over the floor or blocking the toilets
- ✓ You can't toss them into a bin and set them alight
- ✓ Hygienic, comfortable to use and gentle on sensitive skin

How do I wash my hands?

That is not a silly question

We recommend the following hand washing practice:



1 Wet hands with warm water and apply soap.



2 Rub hands together vigorously (rub all areas)



3 Wash for at least 20 seconds (about the same time as it takes to sing 'Happy Birthday')



4 Rinse well and dry hands thoroughly

There are several methods of hand drying available. Remember to work hands under an air dryer by rubbing them to dry quickly and effectively, just as you would if using paper or cloth.

The most important thing, no matter which method you use, is to make sure you COMPLETELY dry your hands.



School absenteeism skyrockets in the Winter months

Here's why ...

Coughs, colds, sore throats, flu and chest infections are the cause of the seasonal rise in school absenteeism for both students and staff during the winter months. Most people are aware that respiratory infections can be spread by coughing and sneezing close to others, the so called droplet infection route. More often, however, these problems have been picked up through contact with classroom and shared items that have become contaminated with virus. Once on the hands, using your fingers to touch entry points such as the eyes, nose and mouth is all that is needed for an infection to get started. Before you know it, you're sick – and making those around you sick as well.

Carefully washed and dried hands essential for World Health

In 2009, the World Health Organisation declared a worldwide pandemic. Many countries, including New Zealand, set up border patrols to contain the spread of a dangerous new virus – Novel Influenza A H1N1 ("Swine Flu"). However, the controls really just bought the world a bit of time to plan an emergency response. Eventually the virus took hold of every country it reached, including New Zealand.

Hand-washing was promoted everywhere as the Number 1 defence for preventing the spread of H1N1, and is in fact at the top of the list of preventative hygiene generally. Why? Because it prevents the contact transfer of viruses and other micro-organisms.

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