## Hand Washing



# Reduce the risk of common infections and viruses



### Where can I get other information?

Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000, TTY 1-866-797-0007

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care 1-866-532-3161, TTY 1-800-387-5559 www.health.gov.on.ca

Health Canada 1-866-225-0709 TTY 1-800-267-1245 www.hc-sc.gc.ca

Thunder Bay District Health Unit 1-807-625-5900 www.tbdhu.com

Northwestern Health Unit (Dryden) 1-807-223-3301 www.nwhu.on.ca

### REMEMBER...Your health and the health of those around you rests in your clean hands



### **Contact Information**

**Office Hours:** 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Local Time) Monday to Friday

**Thunder Bay** 961 Alloy Drive Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5Z8 Tel: 1-807-345-7339 Toll-free: 1-800-626-5406

#### Kenora

35 Wolsley Street, Suite #3 Kenora, ON P9N 0H8 Tel: 1-807-467-4757 Toll-free: 1-877-661-6621

#### Dryden

6 – 61 King Street Dryden, ON P8N 1B7 Tel: 1-807-223-5948 Toll-free: 1-877-661-6621

#### **Fort Frances**

110 Victoria Avenue Fort Frances, ON P9A 2B7 Tel: 1-807-274-8561 Toll-free: 1-877-661-6621 Revised May 2019 Ref G #13

Disponible en français.

Home and Community Care Support Services North West (Head Office) 975 Alloy Drive, Suite 201 Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 5Z8 Telephone: 807-684-9425

## HELP STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS: KEEP YOUR HANDS CLEAN

## Why is it important to keep hands clean?

The most common way germs are spread is by people's hands. Touching your eyes, nose or mouth without first cleaning your hands can lead to illnesses such as colds, diarrhea, flu and serious diseases such as Hepatitis A. Hand washing is the single most important thing you can do to help reduce the spread of infections. Washing your hands with soap and warm water can help protect you, your family, children and others.

### When should I wash my hands?

Hand washing should be a part of your daily routine, especially:

- · When hands are visibly dirty
- After using the bathroom
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After touching animals or animal waste
- · Before eating or handling raw food
- · After changing a baby's diaper
- After handling garbage
- After touching an ill or injured person



## How do I wash my hands properly?

It takes at least 15 seconds to wash your hands properly- this is about how long it takes to sing *"Happy Birthday to You"* twice through.

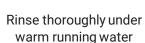
2



Remove jewellery and wet hands and wrists with warm water



Lather and scrub palms, top of hands and fingers for 15 seconds



Apply 1-2 squirts of soap

(size of a quarter)



Dry hands with a single use towel or air dry hands



Turn off tap with towel after drying hands



# Are hand sanitizers an alternative to washing with soap and water?

Hand sanitizers containing at least 60% alcohol are very useful when soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty.

Apply a small amount and rub your hands together, spreading the sanitizer over your fingers, the top of your hands and wrists. Rub them together for at least 15 seconds until the gel feels dry.

Alcohol is very drying to skin, you may apply a non-scented lotion after cleaning your hands.

## What else can I do to help prevent the spread of infection?

- Stay home when you are ill
- Cover your nose and mouth with a disposable single- use tissue when sneezing and/or cough into your sleeve
- Keep your nails short and avoid chipped nail varnish