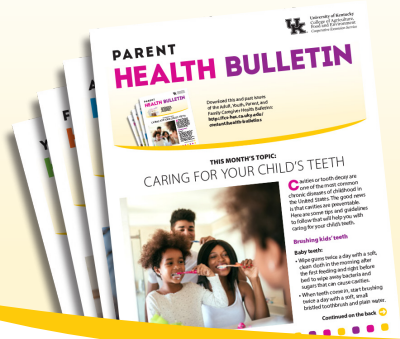


# PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN



**DECEMBER 2024**

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## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

# PREVENT ILLNESS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



**T**he holiday season is a busy time of year — there are many places to go, things to do, people to see, and fun to be had. Help keep yourself and your family feeling well this season by teaching good hand-washing habits and helping your kids stick to them.

There are six steps to hand-washing. Wash your hands alongside your child to demonstrate and talk through all the steps:

- 1.** Wet your hands with clean, running water.
- 2.** Turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- 3.** Rub your hands together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- 4.** Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.

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- 5.** Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
- 6.** Dry your hands using a clean towel or an air dryer.

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs in most situations. If soap and water are not available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Kids often need reminders of when to wash their hands as well. Encourage your family to wash their hands at these times:

- Before and after preparing food
- Before and after eating food
- Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After touching garbage

Do you feel like a broken record reminding your family how and when to wash? The following

tips can make hand-washing seem more fun, and become a staple part of your family's daily routine:

- Use a small kitchen or sand timer to help kids visualize how long to wash their hands
- Let your kids pick out the scent or color of soap
- Sing aloud when washing — let them pick the song (any song at least 20 seconds)
- If finding the right water temperature is a problem, use a marker to show where to turn the faucet
- Post a joke or comic on the bathroom mirror for your kids to find and read while they wash.
- Place reminder stickers around the house — on the pet food container, on the top of the garbage can, on the tissue box, etc. — to remind family members when to wash their hands

**REFERENCE:**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, April 11). When and how to wash your hands. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/bam/child-development/how-to-wash-hands.htm>

**PARENT  
HEALTH BULLETIN**

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