

Procedure #3 Surgical Hand Washing

PURPOSES

- To reduce the number of microorganisms on the hands
- To reduce the risk of transmission of microorganisms to clients
- To reduce the risk of cross contamination among clients
- To reduce the risk of transmission of infectious organisms to oneself

Equipment

- Surgical scrub items (antimicrobial soap, two brushes, and nail file)
- Surgical shoe covers (booties) and cap, face mask, sterile gown, and proper-size gloves
- Sterile towel

Action

1. Rings, watches, and bracelets should be removed prior to beginning the surgical scrub.
2. Use a deep sink with side or foot pedal to dispense antimicrobial soap and control water temperature and flow.

3. Have two surgical scrub brushes and nail file

4. Apply surgical shoe covers and cap to cover hair and ears completely.

5. Apply mask

6. Before beginning the surgical scrub:

a. Open the sterile package containing the gown; using aseptic technique, make a sterile field with the inside of the gown's wrapper.

b. Open the sterile towel, and drop it onto the center of field.



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c. Open the outer wrapper from the sterile gloves, and drop the inner package of gloves onto the sterile field beside the folded gown and towel.

7. At a deep sink with foot or knee controls turn on warm water; under flowing water, wet hands, beginning at tips of fingers, to forearms—keeping hands at level above elbows. Prewash hands and forearms to 2 inches above the elbow.



8. Apply a liberal amount of soap onto hands, and rub hands and arms to 2 inches above elbows



Using nail file under running water, clean under each nail of both hands, and drop file into sink when finished



10. Wet and apply soap to scrub brush, if needed. Open prepackaged scrub brush if available. With brush in dominant hand, using a circular motion, scrub nails and all skin areas of nondominant hand and arm (10 strokes to each of the following areas):

a. Nails

b. Palm of hand and anterior side of fingers

11. Rinse brush thoroughly, and reapply soap.

12. Continue with scrub of nondominant arm with a circular motion for 10 strokes each to the lower, middle, and upper arm; drop brush into the sink.



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13. Maintaining the hands and arms above elbow level, place the fingertips under running water, and thoroughly rinse the fingers, hands, and arms (allow the water to run off elbows into the sink); take care not to get uniform wet.



14. Take the second scrub brush and repeat actions 10–13 on dominant hand and arm.
15. Keep arms flexed and proceed to area (operating or procedure room) with sterile items



16. Secure sterile towel by grasping it on one edge, opening the towel, full length, making sure it does not touch uniform.

17. Dry each hand and arm separately; extend one side of the towel around fingers and hand, and dry in a rotating motion up to the elbow



18. Reverse the towel and repeat the same action on the other hand and arm, thoroughly drying the skin.

19. Discard the towel into a linen hamper.

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PROCEDURE CHECKLIST

Surgical Hand Washing

Check (✓) Yes or (✗) No

PROCEDURE STEPS	Yes	No	COMMENTS
1. Applies surgical shoe covers, cap, and face mask before the scrub.			
2. Ensures that sterile gloves, gown, and towel are set up for use after the scrub.			
2. Follows agency policy for length of scrub and type of cleansing agent used (scrub typically takes 2 to 6 minutes).			
3. Follows agency policy regarding fingernail polish.			
4. Avoids chipped polish or artificial nails.			
<i>Pre-wash</i>			
5. Turns on water using knee or foot controls.			
6. Adjusts water temperature to warm.			
7. Wets hands and forearms from elbows to fingertips.			
8. Keeps hands above elbows and away from body.			
9. Applies liberal amount of soap.			
10. Lathers well to 2 inches above the elbow.			
11. Does not touch inside of sink.			
12. Removes debris from under nails, using nail file under running water.			
13. Rinses hands and arms, keeping hands above elbows. (Alternatively: Uses antibacterial gel, per agency policy; does not rinse gel.)			
<i>Surgical Scrub Using Alcohol-Based Surgical Scrub Product</i>			
14. Uses indicated amount.			
15. Rubs on all surfaces of hands, nails, and arms to 2 inches above the elbow.			
16. Allows hand-rub to dry completely before donning sterile gloves.			
<i>Surgical Scrub Using Antimicrobial Soap</i>			
17. Wets scrub brush and applies a generous amount of antimicrobial soap if not already in brush.			
18. Using a circular motion, scrubs all the surfaces of one hand and arm.			
19. Scrubs at least 10 strokes on each nail, all sides of fingers, and each side of the hand. Uses at least 10 strokes each for the lower, middle, and upper areas of the forearm.			
20. Rinses brush and reapplies antimicrobial soap. Repeats scrub on the other hand and arm.			
21. Rinses hands and arms, keeping fingertips higher than elbows			
22. Grasps sterile towel and backs away from sterile field.			
23. Leans forward slightly and allows towel to fall open, being careful not to let it touch the uniform.			
24. Uses one end of towel to dry one hand and arm; uses opposite end to dry other hand and arm.			
25. Makes certain skin is thoroughly dry before donning sterile gloves.			