

12 Handwashing with soap

OVERVIEW



Washing hands is an important way to prevent the spread of many epidemics, especially diarrhoeal diseases.

When to wash hands

Wash your hands BEFORE:

- ➔ Preparing or eating food
- ➔ Treating a wound (yours or someone else's)
- ➔ Caring for someone who is ill
- ➔ Breastfeeding

Wash your hands AFTER:

- ➔ Using the toilet
- ➔ Changing infants
- ➔ Handling raw meats
- ➔ Coughing or sneezing
- ➔ Contact with animals (including pets)
- ➔ Caring for someone who is ill
- ➔ Handling rubbish or anything that might be contaminated
- ➔ Coming in contact with a sick person in an epidemic (see *Action tool 13*)

How to wash hands

- ➔ Wet your hands and use soap or ash.
- ➔ Rub all parts of your hands together for 10 to 15 seconds.
- ➔ Use lots of friction and remember to wash all surfaces, including backs of hands and between fingers.
- ➔ Rinse hands well so they are free of soap or ash.
- ➔ Dry hands with a towel.

Use community message(s): 8, 9

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*Wet your hands
and use soap or ash*



Wash for 10 to 15 seconds



Rinse hands well