



Fact Sheet 2

If Hands Could Talk

If hands could talk, they would tell you that

- They can offer hope, healing, and comfort
- Then can create, protect, and defend
- They can also be the route of transmission for a number of pathogens. Here are some examples ¹
 - 80% of hospital staff who dressed wounds infected with Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) carried the organism on their hands for up to three hours!
 - 60% of hospital staff, within 1/2 hour of contact with patients with *Clostridium difficile* infection, were contaminated without even having touched the patient, from merely returning drug charts to the ends of beds!
 - In an ICU study, 40% of all patient-nurse interactions resulted in the same species of *Klebsiella pneumoniae* transmission to healthcare workers' hands, lasting up to 150 minutes, even with contact as slight as touching a patient's shoulder!
 - Meanwhile, washing with soap and water virtually eradicated these organisms!
- With your help, they can also make a difference by
 - building hand hygiene into simple routines, such as when you use aseptic techniques when starting IVs or inserting catheters
 - practicing spontaneous, automatic hand hygiene activities when entering and leaving the clinical setting
 - modelling optimal hand hygiene activities to peers and in the home to your family members

Before you touch anything: before you touch your face, your pen, your coffee cup, a patient, a family member, a hand rail, or an object in the patient's environment...

STOP! Clean Your Hands!

1. Stone, S.P. J of the Royal Soc. Medicine. 2001; 94(6): 278-281.
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