



## BONUS ARTICLE

### Keep scrubbing!

#### Handwashing gets rid of germs

You probably heard these three words of healthy advice a few times over the past year and a half:

**Wash  
YOUR  
HANDS**

Although they've been said and said again, don't let them fall on deaf ears. When it comes to staying healthy, handwashing is one of the most important things you can do.

Cleaning your hands with soap and water removes germs, including those that cause COVID-19, colds, and flu. Handwashing sweeps germs away from your body, making it less likely that you'll fall ill.

If you don't wash your hands:

- You can bring germs into your body when you touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- You can spread germs to others when you touch common surfaces, like doorknobs and tables.



#### Cleaning your hands the right way

Washing your hands is an easy way to stop the spread of germs, but there are some key steps to remember:



Wet hands with clean running water and apply soap,



Lather your hands by rubbing them together,



Be sure to clean the backs of your hands, between fingers, and under fingernails,



Scrub for at least 20 seconds,



Rinse hands under clean water, and



Dry with a clean towel or air dry.

If soap and water aren't available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol. Rub the gel all over your hands and fingers until they're dry (this should take about 20 seconds).

#### When to wash?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends washing your hands:

- Before and after work,
- Before and after work breaks,
- Before preparing food,
- Before eating food,
- After using the restroom, and
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

When COVID-19 is spreading, it's also especially important to wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before and after:

- Touching your eyes, nose, and mouth,
- Touching your mask,
- Entering and leaving a public place, and
- Touching an item or surface (like a door handle) that may be frequently touched by other people. ♦