

# Why wash your hands? What the science says



Washing hands prevents the spread of harmful viruses or pathogens. The CDC recommends washing hands before, during and after the following: food prep, eating, treating cuts or wounds, caring for the sick, blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing, toilet use, diaper changes, touching garbage or animals, animal feed, and animal waste.

## How to wash your hands

1. **Wet** the hands with clean, running water and apply soap.
2. **Lather** areas of the hands (back, fingers, nails) and rub vigorously.
3. **Scrub** for at least 20 seconds (approximately how long it takes to sing “Happy Birthday” twice).
4. **Rinse** the hands well under clean, running water.
5. **Dry** using a clean towel.