

# Defeat Colds And Flu By Washing Your Hands

(NAPSA)—Learning the proper way to wash your hands is nothing to sneeze at.

Handwashing continues to be one of the most simple, yet effective ways to fight colds and flu, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The main way that colds and flu are spread is in respiratory droplets from a cough or sneeze. These droplets travel through the air and may come in contact with the mouth or nose of people nearby, or the germs may land on shared items, such as toys, desks and doorknobs.

If people fail to wash their hands after touching one of these surfaces, they can become vulnerable if they touch their eyes, mouth or nose.

To learn about the importance of washing hands in the fight against infections and foodborne illnesses, children and their parents can visit the Scrub Club® for kids, an animated Web site ([www.scrubclub.org](http://www.scrubclub.org)) developed by the not-for-profit NSF International. The site uses interactive games, activities, music, animated “Webisodes” and a storybook to teach kids how to properly wash their hands.

“Handwashing is the easiest, most important thing we can do to prevent the spread of illness,” said William Fisher, vice president of NSF International. “Because kids often respond to entertaining, educational material, we have created the Scrub Club®—an interactive, entertaining public service. Through teaching proper handwashing, the Web site can help reduce the 164 million school days lost to sickness each year.”

## The Six Steps to Proper Handwashing

The Scrub Club® Web site features seven soaper-hero kids—Hot Shot, Chill, Squeaks, Taki, Scruff, Tank and P.T.—who transform to represent the six steps to proper handwashing:



**A new online storybook shows kids that using hand sanitizers can help kill germs when soap and water are not available.**

Step 1: Wash with warm water. Hot Shot and Chill turn into hot and cold water faucets and then combine to make the warm water essential for proper handwashing.

Step 2: Apply soap—bar or pump are both fine. Squeaks can transform into various forms of soap, from bars of all sizes to pumps of all kinds.

Step 3: Wash for a full 20 seconds, rubbing hands together to lather soap. Taki becomes a clock that counts down the required 20 seconds for thorough handwashing.

Step 4: Clean around your fingernails, using a nail brush if you have one. Scruff reminds kids that hands aren't clean until the nails are clean.

Step 5: Rinse away soap with warm water. Tank turns into a sink and serves as a reminder to rinse away germs.

Step 6: Dry with paper towels or warm air dryer. P.T. transforms herself into paper towels.

For additional information, visit [www.scrubclub.org](http://www.scrubclub.org). This Web site features a new storybook with a character named Gel-Mo™, who teaches kids about using hand sanitizers to help kill germs when soap and water are not available.

Other helpful resources include [www.cdc.gov/flu/school](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/school), [www.fightbac.org](http://www.fightbac.org) and [www.cleanhandscoalition.org](http://www.cleanhandscoalition.org).