

# Health And Well-Being

## Listen To Your Mother: Wash Your Hands

(NAPSA)—Despite the obvious benefits, there are still many people who do not follow good hand-washing habits.

“If we all simply wash our hands frequently and correctly, we can play a huge role in reducing the spread of germs from one person to another,” said Paul Santoro, CRNA, president of the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA). “From a healthcare perspective, the AANA views hand-washing negligence as a critical patient safety problem and promotes requiring all healthcare professionals to comply with proper hand hygiene standards for their own safety and the safety of their patients.”

To help promote hand hygiene, the healthcare experts at the AANA recommend that everyone follow these simple tips on proper hand-washing from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- **How to wash:** Wet hands with clean running water and apply soap. For 20 seconds, rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all surfaces. To ensure that this is being done for 20 seconds, try humming the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end two times. Afterward, rinse hands well under running water before drying them with a paper towel or an air dryer. If possible, use a paper towel to turn off the faucet.

- **When to wash:** Hands should be washed before and after preparing food, eating, touching people, treating wounds or giving medicine, and treating a sick or



**To wash your hands properly, lather up and scrub all surfaces for about 20 seconds or as long as it takes to hum the “Happy Birthday” song twice.**

injured person. It is equally important to wash hands after activities such as using the toilet, changing a diaper, touching an animal, blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing or handling trash.

In healthcare facilities, adhering to proper hand-washing techniques is essential in reducing the risk of exposing patients to the possibility of infections that are transmitted through touch and consequently could lead to dire consequences. Historically, the AANA has taken a strong stance in advocating for patient safety and preventing unsafe health care practices. The association works closely with the CDC to aggressively address vital issues such as infection control and safe injection practices.

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