

# Patient Safety News

A Quarterly Update

August 2008 | No. 5

## Making Connecticut Safer Two Hands at a Time

Although hand washing is not a new idea, Connecticut is renewing its commitment to promoting this simple task to reduce healthcare-associated infections and ensure patient safety. Surgery Centers across the state are pledging their support and renewing their efforts to promote hand washing as a way to further protect their patients, their employees, and Connecticut's communities.

### Reducing healthcare-associated infections

- Patients in Surgery Centers can sometimes be at risk for healthcare-associated infections.
- Necessary healthcare procedures sometimes can expose patients to infection if proper steps are not taken.
- Hand washing is an important step in reducing the spread of infections in Surgery Centers and in the community.

### Hand washing in Surgery Centers

- A patient's healthcare team consists of all the people that come in contact with him or her at the Surgery Center. This includes all the healthcare workers—doctors, nurses, and assistants. It also includes the patient's friends and family.
- Everyone on the healthcare team should wash their hands before they touch the patient—that means everything from taking blood pressures to giving a hello hug to a friend.

### Your role

- As a patient, family member, or visitor, you have a role to play in reducing healthcare-associated infections.
- Wash your hands using soap and water or an alcohol-based gel.
- It's okay to ask others to wash their hands. Remember to thank them.

**Remember to wash your hands before and after your visit. (And before and after you eat, too!)**

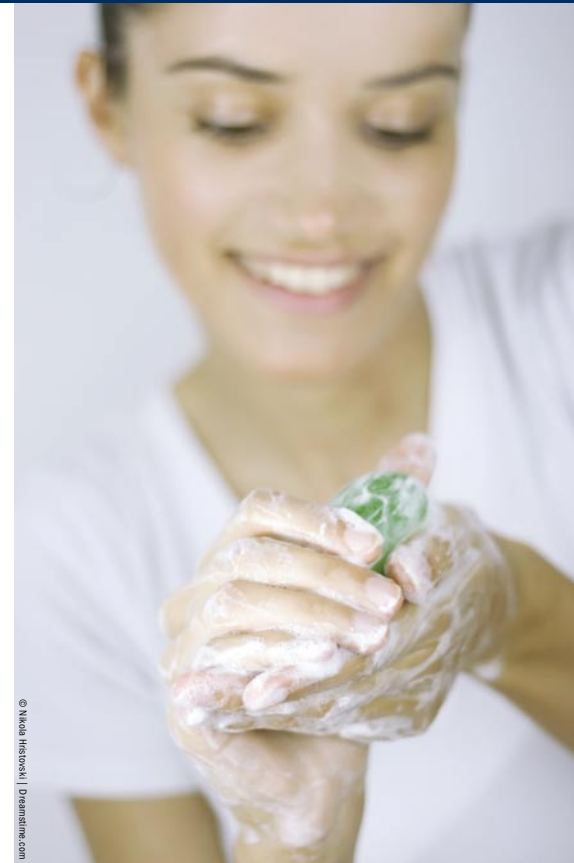
### Did you know?

According to the Connecticut Department of Public Health, people do not wash their hands as often as they think they do. Recent surveys have found that while over 9 out of 10 people claim they always wash up after using the restroom, only about 3 out of 4 actually do.

### Did you know?

According to the Connecticut Department of Public Health, some viruses and bacteria can live from 20 minutes up to 2 hours or more on surfaces like tables, doorknobs, and desks.

**Protect your family, your friends, and your community.  
Remember to wash your hands.**



© Nicola Hironaka | Dreamstime.com

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH

Keeping Connecticut Healthy