IAMU

TOOLBOX TALK

How to *Really* Clean Your Hands*

Keeping hands clean through improved hand hygiene is one of the most important steps that we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others.

Many diseases and conditions are spread by not washing hands with soap and clean, running water. If clean, running water is not accessible, as is common in many parts of the world, use soap and available water. If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol to clean hands.

CDC recommends cleaning hands in a specific way to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. The guidance for effective handwashing and use of hand sanitizer was developed based on data from numerous tudies.

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap**.

2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.

3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.

4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.

5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

*Adapted from the CDC's Handwashing: Clean Hands Saves Lives

**To date, studies have shown that there is no added health benefit for consumers using soaps containing antibacterial ingredients compared with using plain soap. As a result, FDA issued a final rule in September 2016 that 19 ingredients in common "antibacterial" soaps were no more effective than non-antibacterial soap and water, and thus these products are no longer able to be marketed to the general public.