

# Personal hygiene 101: washing hands to prevent diseases

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Hand washing is a since time immemorial been the number one cure to hygiene related illnesses such as diarrhea. Epidemics, deaths especially for children, chronic illnesses as well as other adversities all result from poor hand hygiene (Freeman, Stocks, Cumming, Jeandron, Higgins, Wolf & Fewtrell, 2014). Myriad scholars have delved into studying the need to hand wash but have on the other hand failed to study the different durations that people especially from both genders take while washing hands. This study sought to find whether there is a difference the amount of time that people taken from a target group take to wash hands.

As simple as washing hands is, it succeeds in curbing mammoth infections. It goes without saying, washing hands is the best preventive measure to shield against the spread of germs particularly those resistant to antibiotics and quite challenging to treat. Hand hygiene involves cleaning hands using soap and water, antiseptic hand wash and hand rub or surgical hand antiseptic. The main reason why it is important to clean hands is in order to reduce the spread of deadly germs as well as lower the risk of healthcare provider colonization or infection caused by germs acquired from the patient.

According to Conover and Gibson (2016), alcohol-based hand sanitizers are essentially the most effective in protecting one in reducing the number of germs on the hands of healthcare providers. When hands are not quite dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers are the preferred method for cleaning hands. World Hand Hygiene Day is celebrated on May 5th. The clean hands count campaign offer education on why is paramount to wash hands. Despite the efforts sensitize on the need to perform hand hygiene, many people do not

still understand the real essence of cleaning hands. Essentially, hands should be cleaned before eating, or after getting contact with a patient's skin, blood, inanimate objects, and contaminated objects or after removing glove as well.

### **Methods**

Information was outsourced through research on the internet. Google Scholar was essentially one of the awesome resource that was used. The review was focused on hand hygiene, the need to maintain healthy stands by washing hands as well as the best practices in hand washing. With this regard, a qualitative and quantitative study was conducted and data collected on the amount of time that a certain group composed of male and female members took to wash hands as well as the statistical data of the people who used soap while washing hands. An observational study was performed in both male and female public washrooms in central Melbourne on hand washing practice. Additionally, a hypothesis was formulated and it was as follows:

Ho = There was no significant difference between the duration taken by males and females.

Ha = There was significant difference between the duration taken by males and females.

A T-test was conducted in order to establish whether there was a significance difference between the duration taken by males and females to wash hands.

**Results**

A total of 41 males and 45 females were examined. Of the 41 males examined 29 males postulated that they used soap while 12 did not use soap. On the other hand, 17 females used said that they used soap while 28 females did not use soap. The T-test (two-tailed) were as follows:

T-statistic Value

P(T <= t) two-tail 0. 020053026

t Critical two-tail 2. 015367574

The Tstatistic (0. 02) was less than the Tcritical (2. 015) and thus the null hypothesis which says that there was no significant difference between the duration taken by males and females to wash hands was not rejected.

It was thus concluded that the duration taken by males and females to wash hands was relatively the same. Most of the time, healthcare providers clean their hands less than half of the times though ought to. Many patients who report in health facilities complain of healthcare-associated infections. Hands should therefore be washed after smoking, sneezing, coughing, blowing nose, after handling rubbish, after going to the toilet or changing dippers or after handling a patient.