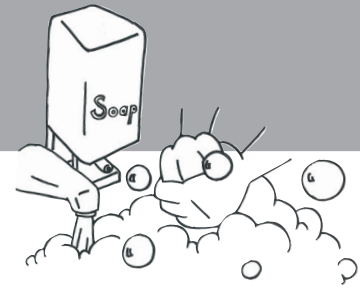


# Don't forget to wash your hands!



For parents of young children, cold and flu season can seem like an endless cycle of someone getting sick, recovering and then catching it all over again.

Illness-causing germs love hands and use them as a way to spread from person to person and object to object. Proper hand washing is your best defense.

## WASH YOUR HANDS THE RIGHT WAY!

- Wet the hands with warm, running water.
- Apply liquid soap and lather. Remember to scrub between the fingers and the backs of the hands.
- Continue scrubbing for at least 15 seconds – sing a song like the “ABC song” or the hand washing song provided on this fact sheet!
- Rinse the hands thoroughly under warm, running water

*Wash my hands with soap  
you see,  
Wash them clean as clean  
can be.  
Inside, outside, my fingers  
too.  
Around my thumbs and then  
I'm through.  
Now rinse away the dirt and  
stains,  
Send those germs down the  
drain!*

*Sung to the tune of  
“Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”*

*Author: Carole Cooper*

- Dry hands using a towel you can throw away (e.g. paper towel) and use this towel to turn off the taps and open the door before throwing it in the garbage.

## WHAT TO DO IF THERE'S NO SOAP AND WATER

If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly soiled (e.g. you can't see dirt and grim on the hands), then you can use an alcohol-based hand rub, like a hand sanitizer.

- Pick a hand sanitizer that has at least 60% alcohol.
- Apply a small dab (e.g. the size of a dime) to the hands.
- Rub the sanitizer into the hands for 15 seconds until the hands are dry. Remember to rub between the fingers and the backs of hands.
- Do NOT use paper towel to dry the hands.



Consider carrying a bottle of hand rub with you when you travel in case you need to clean the hands and soap and water are not available.

## COACH YOUR KIDS!

- Show both “bad” and “good” techniques and explain how important hand washing is to stopping the spread of germs.
- Remind them of the situations when they should be washing their hands:
  - Before eating
  - After using the toilet
  - After playing outside or with animals
  - After touching money
  - After coughing or sneezing
- Help your children practice the right technique and offer gentle reminders if needed
- Be a role model to reinforce the idea of hand washing the right way.

Preventing the spread of illness-causing germs starts at home!



Thunder Bay District  
Health Unit

# Do it in your sleeve!

## COVER YOUR COUGHS AND SNEEZES

Besides regular hand washing, another important way to prevent the spread of illness-causing germs is by covering coughs and sneezes, the right way!

In the past, we taught our children to cover their coughs and sneezes by using their hands. But, if hands are not cleaned right away, the germs are transferred to other surfaces and could be passed on to continue the cold and flu cycle.

The correct way to prevent the spread of germs is by using a tissue or the upper sleeve to cover coughs and sneezes.

### COVER COUGHS AND SNEEZES THE RIGHT WAY!

- Cover your mouth or nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Put all used tissues in the garbage right away.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands, if a tissue is not available.
- Clean your hands after by washing with soap and warm water or using an alcohol-based hand cleaner.

### COACH YOUR KIDS!

- Show both “bad” and “good” techniques and explain how using a tissue or sleeve traps germs while coughing or sneezing into hands can spread germs.
- Visit [www.coughsafe.com/media.html](http://www.coughsafe.com/media.html) and watch the video “Why don’t we do it in our sleeves?” to see the technique demonstrated in a fun way.
- Help your children practice the right technique and offer gentle reminders if needed.
- Be a role model to reinforce the idea of using either a tissue or the upper sleeve to cover coughs and sneezes.



*Are you coughing?  
Are you sneezing?  
Cover your mouth.  
Cover your nose.  
Germs are always flying.  
Germs are always flying.  
Use your sleeve.  
Use your sleeve.*

*Sung to the tune of  
“Frère Jacques”*

Preventing the spread of illness-causing germs starts at home!

