

Wash Up 'Til Time's Up

If you have not already talked about proper hand washing, this activity should be done before the first cooking lesson or any lesson where food is handled.

Target Audience:

All audiences

Topic Area:

Keeping Germs Out of My Food

Objective:

- Participants will wash hands with soap and warm running water before and after touching food and after using the toilet or touching money, diapers, and pets.

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Purpose:

The purpose of this lesson is to show the right way to wash hands to lower the risk of getting sick from handling food in unsafe ways.

What The Nutrition Educator Needs To Know To Answer Questions:

Preventing Food Poisoning or Foodborne Illness

When you handle food with dirty hands you can get food poisoning which is also known as foodborne illness. Each year many people get sick from germs that they do not realize are in the food they eat. It can get into their food because they do not wash their hands, forks, spoons, knives or other utensils before preparing or handling food. Since food poisoning can feel like the stomach flu or a 24-hour bug you do not realize you got sick from the food you ate. Dirty hands can spread germs to food. If you touch food with unwashed hands or have open sores, cuts, or burns on your hands you can spread germs to your food. Bacteria can also live under long fingernails. When you wash your hands, do not forget to clean under and around your fingernails too. Keep your hands clean at all times when you touch food. ¹

There are many ways germs can get on your hands. Always wash your hands¹:

- after using the bathroom
- after working out
- after handling raw meat, poultry, shellfish, or eggs
- after you touch money
- after you touch pets
- after you touch garbage
- after you touch dirty diapers
- after coughing or sneezing
- after you touch your hair

- after smoking
- after you touch garbage
- and BEFORE you touch any food.

Wash hands with water that feels like warm bath water (95°F).² Use soap to wash off dirt and germs from your hands. You do not need to buy antibacterial soap to wash your hands, any soap will work. Rub both the tops and the palms of your hands when you wash. Lace your fingers together to get germs from between the fingers, wash your wrists, and scrub under your nails too. Use a nailbrush to clean under your nails if you have one. Wash your hands for 20 seconds before you rinse. This is about as long as it takes to sing Happy Birthday twice. This is enough time for most people. However anyone working in a hospital or around sick people may need to wash hands longer. Surgeons wash their hands for at least 5 minutes before surgery.³

When you are done washing your hands for 20 second be sure to rinse your hands off with lots of water. The soap grabs the germs and to get them off your hands, you have to rinse.¹ Hold your hands down while rinsing so the soap goes into the sink and does not run up your arms. Use paper towels to wipe your hands dry and do not forget to dry between your fingers.

References:

1. *Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives*, December 2013, Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention, at: <http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/show-me-the-science.html>. Retrieved September 22 2014
2. Don Schaffner, Rutgers University, Rutgers Cooperative Extension Food Safety Specialist. 2001
3. *Surgical Hand Preparation: State-of-the-Art*, 2009, World Health Organization accessed through NCBI, US National Library of Medicine, National Institute of Health at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK144036/>. Retrieved September 22, 2014

For Additional Reading:

Washing Away Misconceptions About Gloves and Hand washing, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Fact Sheet FS991, 2004 at: <file:///C:/Users/giunta/Downloads/fs991.pdf>. Retrieved September 22, 2014

Wash Your Hands. December 2013. Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention at: <http://www.cdc.gov/features/handwashing/>. Retrieved September 22, 2014

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Main Themes:

Nutrition & Diet

Cooking & Food Storage

Shopping

Budgeting

Safety & Sanitation

Materials Needed:

GlitterBug™ Powder or Potion, Brevis Corporation, 1-800-383-3377
Hand held, fluorescent UV black light, Brevis Corporation, 1-800-383-3377 **or**
GlitterBug™ kit with a battery-operated UV lamp, <http://www.brevis.com>
Watch, stop watch or clock with a second hand
Optional: nailbrush

Time the Activity is Expected to Take:

Before You Begin: 2-5 minutes

Activity 1: 5 minutes

Activity 2: 5 minutes

Next Week's Goals: 5 minutes

Wash Up Until Time Is Up

Activity Plan

Before You Begin: (2-5 minutes)

Always ask the participants if they worked on their goals from the lesson the week before. Ask them which goals they worked on and how or what they did to work on them. Try to get a couple of people to tell the class what they did. If they did not work on the goals, remind them to work on them before the next class.

Activity 1: A Not-So-Friendly Handshake (5-10 minutes)

1. If one or two people come early, ask them if they would like to volunteer to help you with an activity. Ask them if they would mind shaking hands with each person as they enter the class. Some people may not want to do this. If the group has more than 10 people, try to get at least 2 volunteers. Have them put some GlitterBug™ powder on their right hand. Then have them sit apart. Do not let the rest of the group know what you are doing. Tell them not to touch anything until the activity is over. Put some powder on your right hand as well.
2. When everyone in the class is there, ask people to say hello to one another and shake each others' hands. Tell the class to introduce themselves by giving each other a handshake. There might be some participants that do not want to shake hands and that is okay. Introduce yourself to the group and then shake the hands of the people around you. Make sure you and the volunteer(s) shake as many hands as you can.

*If you cannot find volunteers and you are the only one with powder on your hands, introduce yourself and tell the participants that you want to practice learning their names. Walk around the room shaking each participant's hand. Remember be aware that some people may not want to shake hands.

3. Explain to the group that germs are easily spread from person to person with a simple handshake. Take out the black light, turn it on and have someone dim the room lights or turn them off. Hold the black light over your hands and show the participants that you put a special powder on your hands that lets germs show up under the black light. Pass the light around the circle. Have them look at their own hands under the light. Their hands should shine under the light. Ask the participants why their hands are shining. Wait for them to

answer. If no one mentions it, be sure to say that this is happening because they touched germs and have not washed their hands since touching the germs.

4. Ask the participants if they know where the germs came from. Wait for them to answer. You can share with them that they came from the contact they had with the people whose hand they shook. Tell them that in everyday life germs are everywhere and spread like the powder they just saw. We do not always know where they come from. But each time we touch something it could have germs. That is why it is important to wash hands often.
5. Ask the class to tell you when they think they should wash their hands. Start a short discussion about the most important times to wash hands. If the participants leave out anything on the list below, be sure to share it with them.
 - after using the bathroom
 - after working out
 - after handling raw meat, poultry, shellfish or eggs
 - after you touch money
 - after you touch pets
 - after you touch garbage
 - after you touch dirty diapers
 - after coughing or sneezing
 - after you touch your hair
 - after smoking
 - after you touch garbage
 - after you touch your mouth

Explain that they should **always** wash their hands before they touch food.

Activity 2: Clean Hands – How Long does it Take? (5-10 minutes)

1. Tell the class you want to see how much time they take to wash their hands.
2. Tell the participants that you are going to use a stop watch (or watch) to time them.
3. Ask them to start rubbing their hands together for as long as they usually wash and start the stop watch.
4. Notice which participants stop washing before the 20 seconds are up.

5. When the 20 seconds are up tell the class that 20 seconds just went by. Tell them this is how long they should wash their hands **before** rinsing to be sure germs are off their hands.
6. Ask how many people took the full 20 seconds. Tell them most people do not realize that they should wash their hands for that long. Tell the participants that if they don't always wear a watch, they can time 20 seconds of hand washing by:

- 1) singing *Happy Birthday* twice or
- 2) saying – I love to clean my hands – 4-5 times.

7. Ask the class how long they think surgeons scrub their hands before surgery. Have them guess. Tell them surgeons wash their hands for at least 5 minutes. Ask if that surprises anyone.

Tell the participants that surgeons need to make sure that almost all germs are washed off their hands to prevent their patients from getting an infection. Surgeons must also wear gloves as added protection. Tell them that the average person just needs to wash their hands for about 20 seconds to get most of the germs off their hands.

10. Tell the participants that you would like to show them proper hand washing technique. Show the correct hand washing motions while you act out washing your hands. Make sure to:
 - rub the tops and palms of the hands
 - wash the wrists
 - lace the fingers together to get germs in between the fingers.
 - get the dirt out from under the nails. A nailbrush may be helpful for this part.
11. Have them try it themselves. If there are sinks in the room let the participants wash their hands at the sink.
12. If there are no sinks, have the participants act out how they wash their hands.
13. Tell them you are going to time them again. Tell everyone to begin to wash or pretend to wash his or her hands the way you just showed them. Tell them to all start at the same time. Let them know when you are going to start timing and tell them to keep washing or pretending to wash until you tell them 20 seconds have passed.

14. Remind them that this is how long it takes to wash your hands and get most of the germs off.

Next Week's Goals: (5 minutes)

1. Ask the participants to name one thing that they learned in this activity that they will use. Make sure that the learning objective is said, and if not, be sure to say that objective. Ask the participants to think of ways they can remember to wash their hands during the week at home.
2. Ask if anyone has comments, suggestions, and questions.
3. Thank the participants for coming and tell them what the next lesson will be about.

For the Teacher: What Makes This Activity Behaviorally Focused?

- Before you begin give participants an opportunity to share the changes they made from the previous lesson. If participants didn't get a chance to work on changes, they can get tips and encouragement from their peers and plan how they will make changes before the next class.
- Activity 1 is behaviorally focused because the class can see how germs are spread through a handshake. Touching others is a common behavior. The participants also describe why hand washing is important. Participants think about times when hand washing is needed in their own lives. They learn the most important times to wash their hands.
- Activity 2 has people act out and practice the right way to wash their hands. It gives participants a chance to compare how long they wash their hands to the 20 seconds they need to take. Participants practice washing their hands for 20 seconds.
- In Next Week's Goals, participants are invited to name one thing that they learned during the class that they will use. They choose the behaviors they will work on during the coming week.



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