



## ASH FACTS...

### *Did you remember to wash your hands today?*

**Did you remember to wash your hands today?** When we forget to wash our hands, or don't wash them properly, we can spread germs to other people, or give them to ourselves by touching our noses, eyes, and mouths. Hand washing is the most effective way to keep germs from spreading and to keep us from getting sick. Unwashed or poorly washed hands can spread colds, flu, infections, strep throat, diarrhea, influenza, hepatitis A, and intestinal problems.

We can pick up germs and viruses from objects, such as doorknobs and stair railings, shaking hands, and putting your mouth on a telephone receiver.

**How long does it really take?** If you washed your hands today, did you wash them correctly? Here are simple steps to scrubbing those germs away - Use warm water, lather hands with soap, rub hands together for at least 10 seconds (singing "Happy Birthday" is the perfect length of time), rinse with warm water, and pat hands dry with paper towel. When

there is no soap or water available, one alternative is to use waterless hand scrubs (on wipes or in a rinse).

**When did you wash your hands?** Did you use soap? What have you done since you washed? Did you know that one in three people do NOT wash their hands after using the bathroom? We should be washing our hands:

- After using the bathroom;
- After blowing nose, sneezing, or coughing;
- Before eating or handling food;
- After handling uncooked meat;
- After taking out the trash;
- After changing a diaper;
- After handling money; and
- After playing with a pet.

**Don't under estimate the power of hand washing! The few seconds it takes could save you a trip to the doctor's office.**

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*A message from ASH  
Agencies for School Health*

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