



PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF SKIN DAMAGE RELATED TO FREQUENT HAND HYGIENE

SKIN CARE TIPS TO PROTECT THE SKIN

- Wash your hands in lukewarm water. Use soap, and wash every part of your hands, including between your fingers and around your nails
- Dry hands by patting, versus rubbing, which may increase skin irritation. Use clean paper towel, but leave some water on them. You can also let your hands air dry. While your hands are slightly damp, apply hand cream or ointment. Work the cream or ointment into your fingertips and nails.
- When using hand sanitizer, apply your hand cream or ointment immediately after the hand sanitizer dries.
- Dermatologists recommend using a hand cream or ointment that:
 - #1: Contains ingredients like dimethicone, silicones, ceramides, mineral oil or petrolatum
 - #2: Comes in a tube rather than a pump-bottle
 - #3: Says “fragrance-free” and “dye-free” on the tube** If the product you are using meets these 3 recommendations, it tends to feel less irritating to dry, chapped skin.
- If tolerable, apply thick hand cream before going to bed. Wear cotton gloves while you sleep and this will help re-hydrate.

Hand Sanitizer vs. Soap and Water

If you have a lot of cracks in the skin on your hands, or have dry, chapped hands, be careful about how often you use alcohol-based hand sanitizers, which can further dry out your skin.

When given a choice, use mild, fragrance-free cleansers to wash your hands. These soaps are more gentle than hand sanitizer foams, and they can be more effective when proper handwashing techniques are used.

REMEMBER:

Due to the nature of our work environment, it is not always easy to follow the skin care tips.

Focus on your time away from work and make skin care a priority.

IMPORTANT!

Not all hand creams are compatible with medical gloves. While at work, use hand creams supplied by your employer.

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

<https://consultqd.clevelandclinic.org/soap-vs-hand-sanitizers-and-7-recommendations-to-avoid-dry-hands/>

<https://www.nswoc.ca/>

<https://www.aad.org/public/diseases/eczema/types/hand-eczema>

DATE: _____
FACILITY: _____

SAFETY TALK LEAD BY: _____
DEPARTMENT: _____

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

WHAT ARE SOME INGREDIENTS TO LOOK FOR IN MOISTURIZER OR OINTMENT WHEN EXPERIENCING DRY, CHAPPED SKIN?

CAN I MOISTURIZE MY HANDS IF USING HAND SANITIZER?

I HAVE DRY, CHAPPED SKIN ON MY HANDS. WHICH IS GENTLER TO USE—HAND SANITIZER OR SOAP AND WATER?

EMPLOYEE CONCERNS & IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

EMPLOYEES PRESENT:

FOLLOW UP ON CONCERNS:

If you have any feedback on the Safety Talks program or a suggestion for a Safety Talk, please contact a member of the Wellness & Safety Team or email healthpeihr@ihis.org

Safety Talks can be found on the Staff Resource Centre at: <https://src.healthpei.ca/safety-talks>