

Handwashing vital to health

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Just how important is it to remember to wash our hands? Evidently it's very important according to doctors and medical personnel, saying it is the best way to prevent sickness and prevent spreading germs.

Many times children and many adults forget to wash their hands before eating or after using the restroom or from playing outside. Germs are spread by touching dirty hands, consuming contaminated water or food, touching contaminated surfaces or even from the air when someone coughs or sneezes. Germs are everywhere, and we must do what we can to kill them.

Good hand washing is one of the best ways to kill germs and prevent spreading many illnesses, especially the common cold and the flu many are experiencing.

Hands should be washed in warm water, not too hot or too cold. Use soap and lather for about 20 seconds, and officials say it doesn't have to be antibacterial soap. Remember to get between fingers and around fingernails all the way up the wrists. Dry well with a clean towel or use those new air dryers where towels are not necessary.

We should also try not to touch our eyes, nose or mouth, because we can spread germs to our bodies.

Some of you might say, "I use hand sanitizers, so I don't have to wash." According to the Centers for Disease Control, use hand sanitizers only if soap and water are not available. Then they encourage using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol to clean hands.

They also encourage against swallowing alcohol-based hand sanitizers because it can cause alcohol poisoning. Young children are not encouraged to use it for this reason.



Bobby Ray Memorial kindergarten students, from left, Lilah King and Khloe Robertson know proper handwashing techniques, using warm water and lots of soap, followed by scrubbing and rinsing.

At right, Bonnie Bear consoles Eastside student Matthew Cox who visited the school nurse not feeling well. School nurses have been bombarded with various illnesses and symptoms from children, analyzing each before calling the parents.

