

WASH Counseling Messages

Choose one or two areas from the messages below that clients feel they can improve.

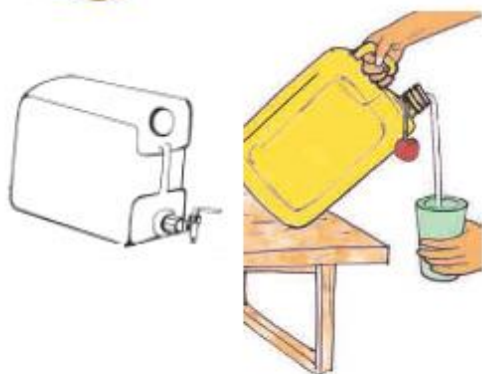
1. Use treated water for drinking and store it safely.

- Treat water to make it safe to drink using one of these options:
 - Hypochlorite (chlorine) solution
 - Boiling
 - Solar disinfection (SODIS)
 - Commercial filter
- Store treated water in a covered container with a narrow neck and a tap if possible.
- Do not touch the water in the container with your hands. Pour it into a clean pitcher to serve it or hang a ladle on the wall to dip the water to serve it.



Boil, filter, or treat water for drinking, cooking, or taking medicines.

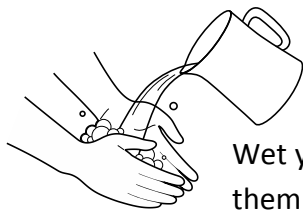
Store the water in a container with a tight-fitting lid.



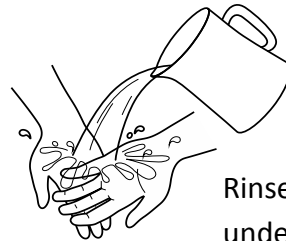
Serve the water with a clean ladle so that nothing dirty (your hand or a cup) touches it.

2. Wash hands properly.

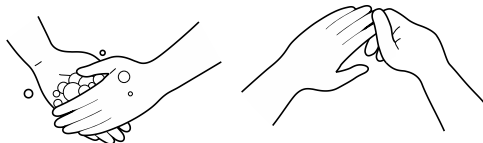
- Handwashing with soap prevents infection from spreading person to person.
- Rinsing hands is not enough—use soap or ash every time you wash your hands.
- Wash your hands under poured or flowing water to remove dirt and germs. Do not wash your hands in a basin of water that many people use to wash their hands in. The water becomes dirty, and washing your hands in this water does not prevent infection.
- Wash your hands before you handle, prepare, or eat food; before you feed someone or give them medicines; and often when you are preparing food.
- Wash your hands after you go to the toilet, clean someone who has defecated, blow your nose, cough, sneeze, or handle an animal or animal waste.
- Wash your hands both **before and after** you take care of someone who is sick.

1

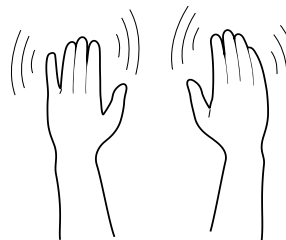
Wet your hands and lather them with soap or ash.

3

Rinse your hands under a stream of water.

2

Rub your hands together and clean under your nails.

4

Shake excess water off your hands and air dry them.

Source: Hygiene Improvement Project. "[How to Wash Your Hands: Counseling Card](#)."

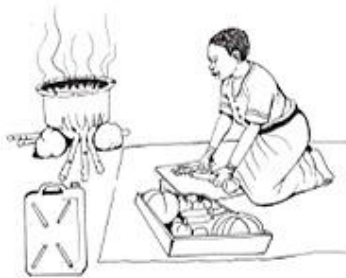
Critical times to wash hands:

BEFORE

Eating, breastfeeding, or feeding a sick person



Cooking



Giving or taking medicine



AFTER

Defecating



Cleaning a baby



BEFORE AND AFTER

Caring for a sick person



Source: Hygiene Improvement Project. [“How to Wash Your Hands: Counseling Card.”](#)

3. Always use a latrine.

- Keep latrines as far away from houses or cooking areas as possible.
- Upgrade pit latrines with cleanable platforms, covers over the pits, housing that provides privacy, and nearby hand washing stations.
- Clear the path to the latrine by removing stones and branches and filling in holes.
- Keep the latrine platform, seat, walls, and other surfaces clean and free of feces. Put all anal cleaning materials in the latrine. Put a scoop of lime or ash in the latrine after defecating to reduce odor and keep flies away.
- Build supports (e.g., poles, ropes, stools) for children or weak household members so they can use the latrine comfortably.

- If you do not have a latrine, put a bedside commode or bedpan next to the bed of children or weak household members and empty it regularly.
- Always wash your hands after defecating.
- If you do not have a latrine, bury feces away from your house.

4. Keep food preparation areas clean.

- Wash all surfaces and equipment used to prepare or serve food with soap and water (and bleach, if possible).
- Protect food from insects and animals by covering it with netting or cloth or keeping it in containers.

5. Separate raw and cooked food.

- Keep raw eggs, meat, poultry, fish, and seafood away from other foods because they can contain bacteria that cause illness.
- Use separate knives and cutting boards for raw foods.
- Store food in covered containers to avoid contact between raw and cooked foods.

6. Cook food thoroughly.

- Cook meat, poultry, eggs, fish, and seafood until they are well done. For meat and poultry, cook until the juice is clear, not pink.
- Bring soups and stews to a boil, at least until you see the first big bubbles.
- Reheat cooked food thoroughly by bringing it to a boil or heating it until it is too hot to touch. Stir the food while re-heating it.

7. Keep foods at safe temperatures.

- Do not leave cooked food out at room temperature for more than 2 hours (1 hour in very hot temperatures).
- Reheat already prepared food before serving it.
- Do not store food in a refrigerator for more than 2 days.
- Do not thaw frozen food at room temperature.
- Prepare food fresh for infants, young children, and people living with HIV. Do not store it after cooking.

8. Eat safe foods.

- Buy only fresh and healthy foods.
- Do not use food beyond its expiry date.
- Use pasteurized milk or boil milk before use.
- Wash raw vegetables and fruits with treated water or wash and peel the skin before eating.