People often touch their eyes, nose, and mouth without realizing it, introducing germs into their bodies. Germs from unwashed hands may get into foods and drinks when people prepare or consume them. Germs can grow in some types of foods or drinks and make people sick. Germs from unwashed hands can be transferred to other objects, such as door knobs, tables, or toys, and then transferred to another person’s hands.

Handwashing helps prevent infections for these reasons:

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2. Germs from unwashed hands may get into foods and drinks when people prepare or consume them. Germs can grow in some types of foods or drinks and make people sick.
3. Germs from unwashed hands can be transferred to other objects, such as door knobs, tables, or toys, and then transferred to another person’s hands.

Washing hands at key times with soap and water is one of the most important steps you can take to get rid of germs and avoid spreading germs to those around you.

Studies have shown that handwashing can prevent 1 in 5 respiratory infections, such as a cold or the flu.

When to Wash:
- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before touching your face
- Before entering the class room
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching doors, light switches, hand rails, and other high touch surfaces
- After touching garbage
- After using the bathroom
- After leaving the class room

How to Wash:
1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off tap and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds.
4. Rinse hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry hands using a clean towel or air dry them.