

Script – Broadcast – The power to fight germs is in your hands

INTRO

If the COVID-19 pandemic taught us one thing, it was the importance of washing our hands.

Apparently, not everyone got the message.

In May, the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) launched the Hands In For Handwashing campaign to raise awareness about the importance of handwashing to help stop the spread of infectious diseases. The campaign includes the [2025 NFID State of Handwashing Report](#), based on a new national survey of U.S. adult handwashing knowledge and habits.

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The survey found that only 33% of respondents report washing their hands more now than they did during the COVID-19 pandemic. Men were more likely to not wash their hands at key times than women.

The more startling fact is that nearly half of adults (48%) admit to forgetting or deciding not to wash their hands at important times, like after shopping, eating at a restaurant or visiting a health care setting.

The top reasons that motivate adults to wash their hands are after using the bathroom, touching food and handling human or animal waste. Washing your hands is a difference maker, especially since 80% of infectious diseases are spread by dirty hands.

Breanne Gendron, a nurse practitioner with OSF HealthCare, offers these important tips – don't touch your face, especially when you're in public. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer is good to use, especially if you can't wash your hands. But it doesn't kill all germs. There's no substitute for washing your hands with soap. Wash with warm or cold water for a good 20 seconds, which is enough time to sing the Happy Birthday song twice.

She adds that the most important thing is, when you're washing you make sure you're scrubbing the top and bottom of your hands and in between your fingers.

Interestingly, many people admit to washing their hands more often in the fall and winter, even though germs that cause colds and norovirus and other infectious diseases spread throughout the entire year. Gendron says make a commitment to always wash your hands.

(((SOS)))

Breanne Gendron, nurse practitioner, OSF HealthCare

"It's just the easiest way to remain healthy. If you wash your hands after you go to the bathroom and before you eat, you're just giving yourself such a leg up on avoiding infecting yourself with something or people that you love and are around. It's easy, so wash your hands." (:18)