

# COVID-19: Caring for Your Hands



The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services recommends washing your hands often, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. **Proper hand care can help prevent the spread of COVID-19.**



- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Need a reminder? Hum the Happy Birthday song twice.
- Keep nails short and trim them often. Avoid cutting cuticles, as they act as barriers to prevent infection.
- Never rip or bite a hangnail. Instead, clip it with a clean, sanitized nail trimmer.
- Scrub the underside of nails with soap and water (or a nail brush) every time you wash your hands.
- Dry and cracked skin on hands can create places for bacteria to hide. Consider using hand lotion or moisturizer to prevent dry skin (ideally at bedtime).

## How to use hand sanitizer

- Apply the gel product to the palm of one hand (read the label to learn the correct amount).
- Rub your hands together.
- Rub the gel over all the surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry. This should take around 20 seconds.

**Caution!** Swallowing alcohol-based hand sanitizers can cause alcohol poisoning if more than a couple of mouthfuls are swallowed. Keep it out of reach of young children and supervise their use.



**For more information:** [www.health.mo.gov/coronavirus](http://www.health.mo.gov/coronavirus)

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