

Healthy Teens

December 2017 Parent Newsletter



Hand Washing

Anytime is hand hygiene time. Studies done by the Centre for Disease Control have shown that if teens wash their hands as few as four times during the school day they have up to 50% fewer colds, flu and sore throats.

When it comes to hand washing, there are five important steps:

1. Wet hands with warm water
2. Apply enough soap
3. Scrub for 20 seconds focusing on the thumb and fingertips
4. Rinse off the soap and dirt
5. Dry hands well

The first four steps remove 60% of the germs. The last 40% of the germs come off when hands are dried. Keeping skin in good condition also keeps the germs away, so use lotion if skin gets dry. If the dirt is visible, waterless hand gels do not work. The best way to keep the germs away is to use plain soap and water, spend the time and get good friction.

Hand hygiene continues to be one of the best and simplest ways to stay healthy all year round.

Articles

Hand Washing

Smokeless Doesn't Mean Harmless

Health Advice is as easy as 8-1-1

Did you know you can get trusted health advice around the clock from a registered nurse by dialing Health Link at 8-1-1?

Health Link is Alberta's free 24/7 health information and advice line. They can help assess symptoms and help you decide if you need to seek medical attention.



Smokeless Doesn't Mean Harmless

In Alberta, using spit tobacco or smokeless tobacco is a concern. As a matter of fact, spit tobacco use is higher in Western Canada than in any other part of Canada. In 2012, 40% of all spit tobacco shipments in Canada were sent to Alberta.

Spit tobacco is a mixture of tobacco, nicotine, sweeteners, salt, abrasives and other chemicals. It's highly addictive. As a parent, it's important to know that flavours, such as cherry and grape are added to mask the harsh taste of the tobacco. This creates 'starter products' that are easier for new customers to use. Although spit tobacco was once used mainly by older men, it is now used most often by boys and young men.

Using spit tobacco is not harmless. There are over 3000 chemicals in spit tobacco,



including at least 28 that cause cancer. Because nicotine is so addictive, it can be very hard to quit using. Using spit tobacco can cause hairy tongue, harmless but ugly raised stains on the tongue.

Spit tobacco has been linked to many serious health problems, such as:

- Mouth cancer
- White patches inside the mouth, called leukoplakia,

that may turn into cancer

- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Heart attacks



For more information and support visit

www.albertaquits.ca or call 1-866-710-QUIT (7848)