

# HANDWASHING REMINDERS

Disease-causing microorganisms can be spread through shared toys or other surfaces and when playing closely with others. Handwashing is one of the most important ways to stop the spread of disease-causing microorganisms. About 80% of common infectious diseases are transferred by hands alone. Teaching your children proper and timely hand hygiene, either by washing hands with soap and water or using hand sanitizer, is an easy and effective way to help stop the spread of illness. It is also important to remind children not to touch their face with unwashed hands.

## Follow these simple tips to help your child wash away disease-causing microorganisms:

- Have your child sing the ABCs song for 15 seconds while scrubbing their hands with soap and water
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 70-90% alcohol with Natural Product Number (NPN) should only be used when hands are NOT visibly dirty, and soap and water are not available
- When hands are visibly dirty and soap and water are not available, use moistened towelettes followed by hand sanitizer
- Children should be supervised by an adult when using hand sanitizer
- **Remember to lead by example!**

## THE 6 STEPS TO PROPER HANDWASHING!



This material is provided by York Region Public Health. For more information, visit [york.ca/InfectionPrevention](http://york.ca/InfectionPrevention)

[This document has been prepared and approved by The Regional Municipality of York. We encourage you to share this information in your communications with families in its entirety. Any modification to wording or by reproducing it in part with other wording can alter the original meaning and may no longer be accurate.]

### PUBLIC HEALTH

1-877-464-9675  
TTY 1-866-512-6228  
[york.ca/InfectionPrevention](http://york.ca/InfectionPrevention)



# WHEN TO STAY HOME FROM SCHOOL

Children are in frequent contact with other individuals throughout the day. It's important to understand when it's safe to send your child to school to limit the spread of illnesses in these settings.

Parents should monitor for signs and symptoms of illness in their child to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. If children show signs and symptoms of illness they should stay home and not come to school. Signs and symptoms of illnesses may include:

- Vomiting
- Chills and fever
- Runny nose
- Diarrhea
- Sneezing
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Redness and irritation of the eye

If your child has developed **any** symptoms of illness, please consider staying at home and follow up with a health care provider as necessary.

For further information, please call Access York at 1-877-464-9675 or consult with a health care provider. For 24-hour support from a Registered Nurse on medical symptoms, please contact Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 or TTY: 1-866-797-0007 (for the deaf or hard of hearing).

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# HOW TO PUT ON AND TAKE OFF YOUR FACE MASK

Face masks, when used safely and properly, can act as a barrier to prevent the spread of respiratory infections. While masks are no longer mandated, if students should opt to wear them, then please note the guidelines below for proper mask usage. Wearing a face mask should be combined with other infection prevention and control measures such as cleaning hands regularly, staying home when sick and coughing or sneezing into a mask, tissue, or sleeved elbow.

**Teach your child these simple steps to safely put on and take off their face masks:**

## PUTTING IT ON

-  1. Wash your hands with soap and water for 15 seconds or use hand sanitizer
-  2. Put the mask on your face using the ear loops
-  3. Make sure it covers your nose, mouth and chin
-  4. Even though it's hard, DON'T touch the mask while it's on your face

## TAKING IT OFF

Do not touch the front of your mask to remove it, use the ear loops

-  1. Before taking your mask off, wash your hands with soap and water for 15 seconds or use hand sanitizer
-  2. Only use the ear loops to take your mask off. If you're wearing a throwaway mask, place it in a garbage bin
-  3. If you're wearing a cloth mask, make sure it is washed after each use and place safely in a bag in between uses
-  4. After taking your mask off, wash your hands with soap and water for 15 seconds or use hand sanitizer

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# HOW TO STORE YOUR FACE MASK

While masks are no longer mandated, if students should opt to wear them, then please note the guidelines below for proper mask storage. Face masks help to protect those around you by acting as a barrier to prevent the spread of respiratory infections. During the school day, children may remove their face mask for some activities such as consuming food and drink. It is important your child understands how to store their mask safely in between use.

## **Follow these simple tips to help your child safely use and store their face mask:**

- Remind your child to wash their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer before and after removing their face mask
- Consider sending your child to school or child care with extra masks so they can be changed throughout the day if they become wet or dirty
- Have your child store their wet and dirty reusable mask in a labelled plastic bag until it can be washed
- Remind your child not to share or swap their face mask with others

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