



### HAND WASHING: A WEAPON AGAINST GERMS



Today in class we talked about the important role that hand-washing plays in preventing the spread of many types of germs. Washing your hands is the easiest way to reduce the risk of spreading germs that cause illness and infections.

It seems simple and obvious that it's important, but according to the American Society of Microbiology, while 97 percent of females and 92 percent of males say they wash their hands, only 75 percent of females and 58 percent of males actually do.

Fifty percent of middle and high school students wash their hands, and of these only 33 percent of females and eight percent of males use soap. That makes it even more important to wash your hands since so many people are touching door handles, tabletops and so many other things we also touch.

### AT HOME ACTIVITY

According to the Minnesota Department of Health and other disease prevention organizations, antibacterial soaps are no more

effective than plain soap and water for killing germs. Some scientists believe antibacterial soaps may in fact contribute to the development of antibiotic-resistant germs. Plain soap is what many health care professionals recommend for use at home. Do an inventory of the soaps and cleaners in your home. Is soap available at each sink? What type are they?

### CHOOSE MYPLATE

Washing your hands before, during, and after preparing food and before eating food is very important. When it comes to putting food on your plate remember half of your plate should be fruits and vegetables and contain a variety of colors. Use MyPlate as a tool to help you show what kinds of foods you should eat every day and how much of those foods you should eat. Eating a variety of colorful foods from the five food groups at each meal will help your body stay healthy.

Visit [choosemyplate.gov](http://choosemyplate.gov) for more information on MyPlate.

