

Instructions for ACTIVITY #6 Germs, Germs, Germs

Preparation

Obtain a tube of glitter and a bottle of lotion, before class.

Instructions to Students

“We are going to do a fun activity. After you get your hands real germy, I would like for each of you try one of the following methods to get your hands clean – a dry paper towel; cold water; warm, soapy water without friction; and alcohol-based hand rub. Compare and contrast the different methods of germ removal by looking at each others’ hands. After each of you has tried at least one method of germ removal, wash your hands using the steps you learned in class if your hands are still germy. When you are done, we will discuss what you found out about how best to get your hands clean.”

Explanation of Activity

Pass the bottle of lotion around and have each student squirt a half of a teaspoon of lotion on their hands. They are not to rub it in their hands until you tell them to do so. Go around the room and shake some glitter on the lotion in their hands (try to divide the tube of glitter up equally) and tell them to rub both the lotion and the glitter evenly into their hands. Tell them that the glitter represents germs.

Place students into groups of at least four (4). Within each group, have each group member pick one method to remove germs – (Student 1) a dry paper towel, (Student 2) plain cold water, (Student 3) soap and warm water not using friction, and (4) alcohol-based hand rub. Instruct the groups to compare and contrast the different methods of germ removal by looking at each others’ hands. When done with the compare/contrast session, instruct the students whose hands are still germy to wash them appropriately. After everyone has washed all the germs off their hands, move on to the wrap-up session.

Wrap-up

As a wrap-up, ask the entire class the following questions:

- Which methods of germ removal were effective and which were not?
- What happens when you tried to get the germs off with a dry paper towel?
- What happens when you tried to get the germs off with cold water?
- What do you think the key components are to effectively remove germs from your hands?
- What do you think would happen if you do not keep your fingertips pointed down during handwashing?
- Can you see how easily germs are transmitted to other items (clothing, faucet, door knob, etc.)?
- What is the single most important thing the health care worker can do to prevent the spread of infection?