

Keep it Clean!

By Shaleek Wilson



Dr. Delma Nieves
CHOC Research Specialist,
Pediatric Infectious Diseases

Dr. Nieves began her work at CHOC in 2010. She completed her pediatric residency at CHOC and postdoctoral fellowship in pediatric infectious diseases at the Mattel Children's Hospital. Her clinical interests include infectious diseases of newborns and the immuno-compromised, with a focus on pertussis. Her published works include "The Common Cold: Textbook of Pediatric Infectious Diseases," and several peer reviewed studies on the topic of pertussis in young infants.

Dr. Nieves' philosophy of care: "I think the most important thing is to empower parents and children to be able to take care of themselves."

EDUCATION:
University of Washington School of Medicine

BOARD CERTIFICATIONS:
General Pediatrics and Pediatric Infectious Diseases

15
NUMBER OF SECONDS THAT CHILDREN SHOULD SPEND VIGOROUSLY WASHING THEIR HANDS



WHAT ARE GERMS?

"Germs is a nonmedical term for any organism that can cause an infection," says Dr. Nieves. What kind of infections? Kids, especially in schools, can contract respiratory infections as well as skin infections, says Dr. Nieves. To prevent the spread of germs, especially in classrooms, parents, teachers and caregivers should make sure children are instructed on proper hygiene techniques, like hand-washing.

Children should wash their hands:

- › Before eating
- › After going to the bathroom
- › After blowing their nose
- › After playtime

60 THE LOWEST PERCENTAGE OF ALCOHOL A HAND SANITIZER SHOULD CONTAIN

GERM BUSTERS

Sharing may be a good way for kids to learn social skills, but it's not the best way to stay healthy, Dr. Nieves says. To shield children from "germ monsters," Dr. Nieves advises parents to encourage their children not to share items like utensils, food and drink. Also, making sure they are up-to-date on their vaccines and seasonal flu shot is key.

H₂O VS. HAND SANITIZER

If you're not sure when soap and water or alcohol-based sanitizers are in order, do a hand check. "When you see actual dirt and grime, you need soap and water," says Dr. Nieves. "You can use hand sanitizer when you know your child has touched something that may be contaminated, such as a door knob."

9-to-1

RATIO OF WATER-TO-BLEACH IN A SOLUTION THAT PARENTS CAN MAKE TO KILL GERMS

FEELING BLUE?

It's best for kids to stay home when sick, but if missing work to care for them isn't an option, parents should ensure good communication with the school to minimize the spread of germs to other students. "If kids have a cold, they have to be extra cautious, washing their hands after touching their face or nose," says Dr. Nieves.



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