

Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL	
Section: G. Emergency Medical Services	Effective Date: May 30, 2010
Topic: 4. Operations Directives	Replaces: July 1, 2004
Subject: 39. Personal Hygiene	
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PURPOSE

To have all employees maintain a high standard of personal hygiene.

APPLICATION

Paramedics, EMAs

PROCEDURE

- 1) EMAs/Paramedics must take precautions to ensure that blood and body fluids of a patient do not come into contact with any break in the surface of the skin.
- 2) Hand washing is important following the care of all patients, especially after accidental contact with any blood, body fluids or other secretions.
- 3) In order to maintain a high standard of personal hygiene, all EMA's/Paramedics shall wash their hands thoroughly following patient contact, even if gloves were worn.
- 4) Proper hand hygiene includes the use of alcohol-based hand rubs, hand washing and skin care.
 - Routine hand hygiene can prevent potential infections from spreading. Moisturizers will help prevent skin from becoming excessively dry and cracked. Care must be taken to ensure non-intact skin, especially on the hands, as a result of cuts, scrapes, or dermatitis is adequately covered while performing patient care.
 - Healthy intact skin is an effective barrier to infection.
 - Use of an alcohol-based hand rub is the most effective type of hand hygiene. Alcohol-based hand rubs should not be used when hands are visibly soiled.
- 5) Paramedics should consider the following points regarding hand hygiene:
 - Remove all hand and wrist jewelry. Hand and wrist jewelry should not be worn when providing care to patients.
 - Do not wear artificial nails or nail enhancements..
 - Use warm water. Too cold or too hot will compromise the integrity of the skin.
 - Use adequate amounts of hand rub or soap.
 - Rub hands vigorously to create friction.
 - When using soap, wash for at least 15 seconds ensuring all parts of the

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- hands and wrists are covered.
- Rinse well with water.
 - Refrain from habits such as nail biting.
 - Avoid hand contact with mucous membranes and conjunctiva.
- 6) EMAs/Paramedics with lesions or weeping dermatitis should refrain from direct patient care and handling patient care equipment until the skin condition is resolved.
- 7) Staff should also refer to Policy and Procedure G.8.6.3. Care and Transportation of Communicable Disease Cases.

REFERENCE

Emergency Health Services Branch, 2007 *Infection Prevention and Control Best Practices Manual for Land Ambulance Paramedics*, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care,

Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board, *Care and Transportation of Communicable Disease Cases*, Policy and Procedure G. 8.6.3.