

On the occasion of World Hand Hygiene Day on 5 May 2013, WHO sensitized health care workers to the fact that hand hygiene is the single most important method of preventing and controlling infection in health care facilities.

Many studies have shown that the bacteria that cause hospital-acquired infections are most frequently spread from one patient to another on the hands of healthcare workers. Cleaning your hands before and after having contact with patients is one of the most important measures for preventing the spread of bacteria in healthcare settings to improve and promote best hand hygiene practices during the delivery of health care services.

The theme of this year’s campaign is “Save lives: Clean Your Hands”. The campaign aims to reduce the spread of life-threatening infections through improving hand hygiene practices in health care settings. Hand hygiene is a primary and simple, low-cost measure which is proven to be effective in preventing health care-associated infections.

**Related link**

[Press release](#)

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