The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that handwashing is the most important thing you can do to keep from getting sick.

Soap combined with the scrubbing action helps dislodge and remove germs. It is not necessary to use a special antimicrobial soap - regular bar or liquid soap is sufficient, even for general healthcare workers. In addition, there is concern that antimicrobial soap may eventually contribute to the growing problem of antibiotic resistance. It’s always best to wash your hands with soap and water, but when water isn’t available you can use alcohol-based products for washing your hands.

When Should You Wash Your Hands?

- Before and after treating a cut, burn or wound
- Before preparing or eating food
- When tending to someone who is sick
- After handling uncooked foods, particularly raw meat, poultry, eggs or fish
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After handling an animal (especially a reptile) or animal waste
- After going to the bathroom
- After handling garbage
- After changing a soiled/wet diaper or cleaning up a child who has gone to the bathroom
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