



Health impact of handwashing with soap

Hygiene promotion and handwashing

Handwashing with soap is a simple, low-cost, and effective way to reduce the spread of infectious diseases. It is a key component of public health interventions aimed at preventing and controlling the transmission of pathogens. Handwashing with soap can reduce the number of people who get sick and die from diarrhoeal diseases and respiratory infections. It is also an important part of preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Why promote handwashing with soap?

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What evidence is there for the health impact of handwashing with soap?

a) Diarrhoea

Handwashing with soap and water reduces the risk of diarrhoea. Evidence from multiple studies shows that handwashing with soap and water can reduce the risk of diarrhoea by 30-50%.

Handwashing with soap and water is a simple and effective way to prevent diarrhoea. It is recommended that people wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Author	# studies	Reduction in diarrhoea risk
Handwashing with soap and water	1	30%
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Handwashing with soap and water // Handwashing with soap and water	2	50%

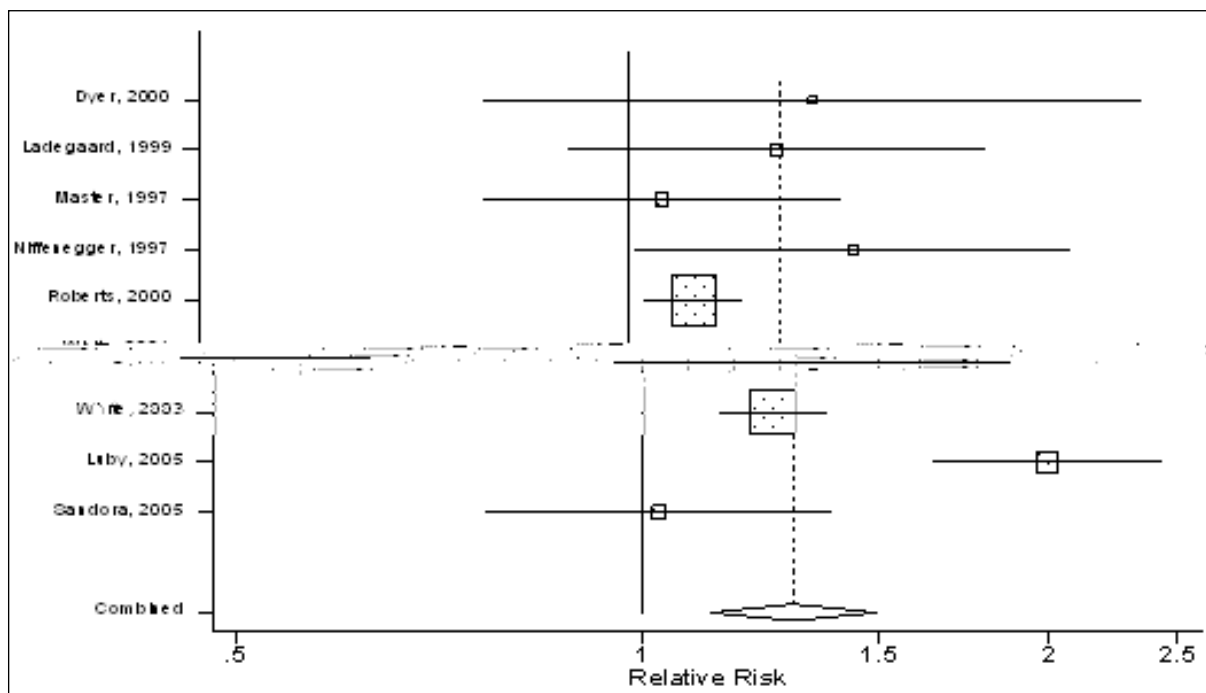


Figure 1. Relative Risk of ...

d) Eye infection

Hand hygiene is important for the prevention of eye infections. The most common eye infections are conjunctivitis and bacterial keratitis. Hand hygiene can help to prevent these infections by reducing the spread of bacteria and viruses.

Limitations of the evidence

The evidence for the effectiveness of hand hygiene in preventing eye infections is limited. Most studies are observational and do not include a control group. This makes it difficult to determine the true impact of hand hygiene on the incidence of eye infections.

— The following are the limitations of the evidence:

- The studies are mostly observational and do not include a control group.
- The studies do not measure the incidence of eye infections directly.
- The studies do not measure the adherence to hand hygiene.
- The studies do not measure the effectiveness of hand hygiene in preventing eye infections.
- The studies do not measure the effectiveness of hand hygiene in preventing other types of infections.
- The studies do not measure the effectiveness of hand hygiene in preventing the spread of eye infections.
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- The studies do not measure the adherence to hand hygiene.
- The studies do not measure the effectiveness of hand hygiene in preventing eye infections.
- The studies do not measure the effectiveness of hand hygiene in preventing other types of infections.
- The studies do not measure the effectiveness of hand hygiene in preventing the spread of eye infections.
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What are the benefits of the use of soap?

Hand hygiene is important for the prevention of infection. The most common types of infection are respiratory tract infections and gastrointestinal infections. Hand hygiene can help to prevent these infections by reducing the spread of bacteria and viruses. The following are the benefits of the use of soap:

- Soap helps to break down the outer layer of bacteria and viruses.
- Soap helps to remove dirt and grime from the hands.
- Soap helps to reduce the number of bacteria and viruses on the hands.
- Soap helps to prevent the spread of infection.

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