

100,000 Lives Campaign

You remember the old saying “Mother knows best?” Unless you are a teenager– you probably agree that mom is right most of the time. It is a proven fact that we should wash our hands often and frequently. Mom always said “wash your hands before dinner, wash your hands after using the restroom, wash your hands after coughing and sneezing, and when in doubt–wash your hands.” Although this is common practice in a hospital, we are emphasizing the importance of hand washing with our staff, physicians and patients.

Montrose Memorial Hospital has joined over 3,000 hospitals across the country in the Institute for Health Care Improvement’s 100,000 Lives Campaign. This initiative asks U.S. hospitals to make a commitment to make changes in care that are proven to improve patient care and prevent avoidable deaths. One area that all hospitals focus on is the prevention of infections while you are a patient in the hospital. As mom said, the best way to fight infections is to wash your hands thoroughly. You can choose to use soap and water, anti-microbial hand sanitizers or alcohol gels. Here at the hospital, we have placed alcohol gel dispensers throughout the hospital and in every patient room. More than 20 published studies prove alcohol-based hand rubs are more effective than soap in reducing the number of bacteria on hands. Patients will notice our staff and physicians washing their hands or using the hand gel before and after caring for them.

As I have talked about before, we encourage our patients to be involved in their care to help prevent of infections. It’s okay for you to ask your care providers if they have washed their hands. They may have washed their hands before they entered your room, so we encourage you to ask if you don’t observe it. As a patient, you may be asked to wash your hands before you eat your meals, before you hold your newborn and at other times. Washing our hands is something we can all do more often. We ask you to work with us to help prevent infections both in and out of the hospital by frequently washing your hands.