HOW TO EFFECTIVELY USE AND HANDLE GLOVES

Using gloves correctly can help prevent new cases of COVID-19, and can help prevent the spread of germs. Here are some tips on how to best and most effectively use gloves.

First, wearing gloves while out in public is not an effective way to prevent COVID-19.

- Practicing good hand hygiene by washing your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and drying your hands completely, offers more protection from COVID-19 than wearing gloves. If your hands are visibly soiled, soap and water are a must! Gloves are not a substitute for good hand hygiene.

- If soap and water is not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol for at least 20 seconds. If your hands are dry before 20 seconds have passed, you have not used enough hand sanitizer to effectively clean your hands. When using hand sanitizer, keep rubbing your hands clean until your hands are dry. This is more effective at cleaning your hands than waving your hands dry.

- To practice good hand hygiene, be sure to clean the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails which you can do by scratching the inside, or palms, of your hands when they are still wet with hand sanitizer. You can also clean the underside of your nails with soap and water, ideally with a nail brush. It is best to keep nails short (less than a quarter inch long).

- Practice good hand hygiene before touching the box or container that holds your gloves and/or before putting gloves on.

When removing gloves, practice the "dirty to dirty, clean to clean" method. This means we consider the outside of both gloves to be dirty, and that we consider the insides of the gloves and our hands to be clean.

- For dirty to dirty, use your gloved thumb and pointer finger to pull the glove of the opposite hand off – starting at the wrist. This way, you are pulling the glove off while also turning it inside out.

- For clean to clean, use your ungloved pointer finger to lift the remaining glove off from the inside out – starting at the inside of your wrist. This way, you are lifting the glove off while also turning it inside out.

Dispose of your gloves immediately after use, preferably in a close-lid garbage container. Never re-use a pair of gloves.

- Practice good hand hygiene again for at least 20 seconds after removing and disposing of your gloves.

You can still touch surfaces that have COVID-19 and other germs on them with your gloves. If you touch your face while wearing these same gloves, then you have likely put yourself at risk for spreading these germs to yourself and catching COVID-19.

- Remember that anything you touch will dirty the outside of your gloves. COVID-19 contamination can go from your gloves to any other surface you touch with those same gloves.

- Be careful when touching items like your phone with unclean hands. Germs on your phone can spread to your face with one phone call. Treat items like your phone as a high-touch surface and disinfect it often.

Remember that glove use alone cannot protect you from COVID-19, and that good hand hygiene can be more effective at protecting you from COVID-19 than glove use.

Make sure to maintain at least a 6-foot distance from others, practice good hand hygiene and wear a mask in public settings or in spaces where it is hard to maintain physical distance from others. These steps can help keep you healthy and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

If you are experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19, please call our Whitman-Walker team at 202.745.7000 for a phone evaluation of your symptoms and to schedule an appointment for COVID-19 testing at our northwest or southeast health centers.

THANK YOU FOR READING AND LEARNING – AND FOR HELPING PREVENT NEW CASES OF COVID-19!

▶ **Watch our video on how to effectively use and handle gloves: bit.ly/wwhglovesuse**

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