

[Resources](#) > [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) > [Hand Hygiene](#) > [Question & Answer](#)

Are non-alcohol BZH hand sanitizers recommended for dental healthcare facilities?

As a matter of policy, Ask OSAP does not recommend or endorse specific products. Ask OSAP can provide you with some general information on this topic.

The 2003 CDC guidelines for infection control in dentistry specifically reference alcohol-based hand rubs. This document can be accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5217a1.htm>

1

Likewise, Guideline for Hand Hygiene in Health-Care Settings Recommendations of the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee and the HICPAC/SHEA/APIC/IDSA Hand Hygiene Task Force appears to reference alcohol-based hand rubs. This document can be accessed at <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5116.pdf> ²

On the CDC website, it references the use of alcohol-based hand rubs in dentistry. The FAQ for hand hygiene states as follows:

What is hand hygiene?

Hand hygiene is a way of cleaning one's hands that substantially reduces potential pathogens (harmful microorganisms) on the hands. Hand hygiene is considered a primary measure for reducing the risk of transmitting infection among patients and health care personnel. Hand hygiene procedures include the use of alcohol-based hand rubs (containing 60%–95% alcohol) and handwashing with soap and water. For surgical procedures, perform a surgical hand scrub before putting on sterile surgeon's gloves. For routine dental examinations and nonsurgical procedures, use an alcohol-based hand rub or use water and plain or antimicrobial soap specific for health care settings. Unless hands are visibly soiled (e.g., dirt, blood, body fluids), an alcohol-based hand rub is preferred over soap and water in most clinical situations because it:

- Is more effective than soap at killing potentially deadly germs on hands
- Requires less time
- Is more accessible than handwashing sinks
- Produces reduced bacterial counts on hands, and
- Improves skin condition with less irritation and dryness than soap and water

For more information on Hand Hygiene, please visit CDC's Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings.³

Resources

1) Kohn WG, Collins AS, Cleveland JL, Harte JA, Eklund KJ, Malvitz DM, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Guidelines for infection control in dental health-care settings—2003. MMWR Recomm Rep 2003;52(RR-17):1-61. <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5217a1.htm>

Accessed on December 14, 2018.

2) U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Guideline for Hand Hygiene in Health-Care Settings. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5116.pdf> Accessed on December 14, 2018.

3) U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Hand Hygiene. <https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/infectioncontrol/faqs/hand-hygiene.html> Accessed on December 14, 2018.