



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 outbreaks of communicable diseases. Handwashing with soap can reduce the risk of illness by up to 30% and is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs.

Why promote handwashing with soap?

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 outbreaks of communicable diseases. Handwashing with soap can reduce the risk of illness by up to 30% and is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs. 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 outbreaks of communicable diseases. Handwashing with soap can reduce the risk of illness by up to 30% and is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs.

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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 especially important in areas where diarrhoea is common and where access to clean water and soap is limited.

Table 1. Summary of the findings of reviews on the impact of handwashing on the risk of diarrhoea

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

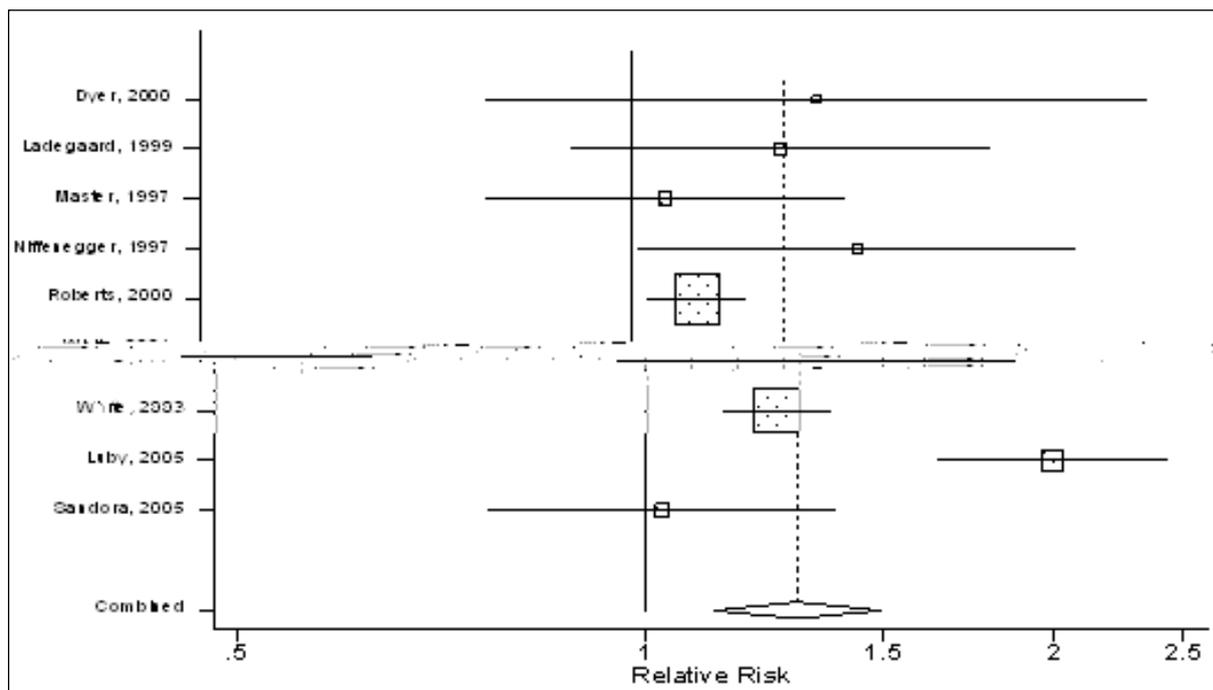


Figure 1. Forest plot showing Relative Risk for various studies. The x-axis is Relative Risk (0.5 to 2.5). The y-axis lists studies: Dyer, 2000; Ladegaard, 1999; Mosler, 1997; Niffenegger, 1997; Roberts, 2000; White, 2003; Leiby, 2005; Sanders, 2005; and Combined. Each study has a point estimate (square) and a confidence interval (horizontal line). A vertical dashed line is at RR ≈ 1.25. The combined estimate is a diamond centered at RR ≈ 1.25.

d) Eye infection

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

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 effect of hand hygiene.

There are several limitations of the evidence:

- Most studies are observational and do not include a control group.
- The studies are often small and do not have a long follow-up period.
- The studies often do not measure the number of eye infections that occur.
- The studies often do not measure the number of hand hygiene events.
- The studies often do not measure the number of hand hygiene events that are performed correctly.
- The studies often do not measure the number of hand hygiene events that are performed at the right time.
- The studies often do not measure the number of hand hygiene events that are performed in the right place.
- The studies often do not measure the number of hand hygiene events that are performed by the right person.

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What are the benefits of the use of soap?

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