



Hand-washing for the Holidays is for the Whole Family

By the Water Quality & Health Council

As we gather to celebrate the holidays, the “gifts” we least hope to share are the unseen *pathogens* that cause colds, flu and other illnesses. Holiday gatherings are prime venues for gift-exchange and, unfortunately, pathogen-exchange.

It’s not rocket science, and most adults know it, but frequent hand-washing can help reduce the “stealth” pathogen-swapping that goes on when folks congregate. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes that [proper hand-washing](#) is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading illnesses to others.



Do your children understand how important hand-washing is to staying healthy? You might start with this [kid-friendly, 30 second video](#) from CDC. Additionally, the American Cleaning Institute offers a fun “[Clean Your Paws for Santa Claus Coloring Page](#)”. The image caption clarifies that hand-washing “with soap and warm water for 20 seconds” precedes the reward of reaching for a cookie. Why not print out a few copies, grab a box of crayons, and share them with the children at your holiday gathering?

Here's wishing you Happy, Healthy Holidays!

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