HAND HYGIENE FOR PEOPLE WITH SPINAL CORD INJURY

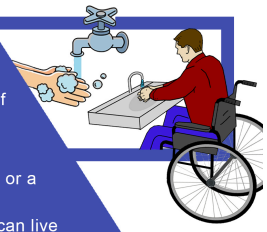
PREVENTING COVID-19

This advice is meant to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Certain supplies may be limited but you can still protect yourself and prevent infection using whatever is available to you; soap and water is always better than nothing.

1 Hand Hygiene Basics

- Soap and warm water: 20 seconds, all parts of hand (front & back, under nails, between fingers, wrists), or
- Sanitizer (70% alcohol): cover all parts of hand (front & back, under nails, between fingers, wrists).
- Take care when you dry your hands; use single-use paper towels in a public place or a clean towel at home.

The coronavirus (that causes COVID-19) can live for hours or even days on a variety of materials; be especially careful of surfaces in public areas that are touched by many people (elevator/door buttons, PIN pads, handrails, touchscreens, etc.)



2a Manual Wheelchair User

- Wash your hands frequently and whenever you enter your living space.
- Remove gloves (if you wear them) before washing your hands. Try to clean your gloves with whatever cleaning product is available.
- After you wash your hands, be careful about touching your tires; you may want to use paper towels or cloths to cover your tires.
- Clean your pushrims as well, since you're constantly touching them…anything that gets on your pushrims is very likely to get on your hands.
- Clean your brake handles, push handles and any other parts of your wheelchair that anyone touches with their hands.
- Clean your tires regularly, and try to avoid making contact between your hands and your tires when you're pushing.

2b Power Wheelchair User

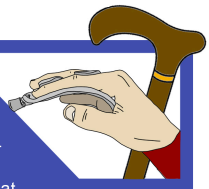
- Wash your hands frequently and whenever you enter your living space.
- Clean your joystick and any other controls (while taking care not to damage the electronics)
- Clean your armrests, tray, and any other parts of the wheelchair that your hands touch.

3 Everyone

- Clean your cell phone or other mobile device, and any parts of a bag or backpack that you touch.

4 Other Assistive Devices

- Clean the handles of your cane or crutches.
- Clean the handgrips and brakes of your walker or rollator, and any other part that you touch (such as a storage compartment).
- Clean all parts of any splints, cuffs, braces, or reachers, or any other assistive device that you touch with your hands.



5 Using Your Mouth

- If you have limited hand function, you may typically use your mouth to grasp and hold all kinds of things..Although it may be more difficult, it's a good idea to find other strategies (including asking for help if necessary) so you can avoid using your mouth, ESPECIALLY with any object that someone else may have touched.

These measures may seem difficult and time-consuming, but it is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT for people living with SCI to prevent infection by the coronavirus. During the current emergency, taking every possible measure to protect yourself will help you stay healthy.

More information on COVID-19 and people living with SCI:
https://sci-can.ca/covid-19-guidance-spinal-cord-injury-community-2020031

SCI&U FOR HEALTHY LIVING

A Research Project of:

Physical Therapy UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

SHAWN FARRUGIA DESIGNS