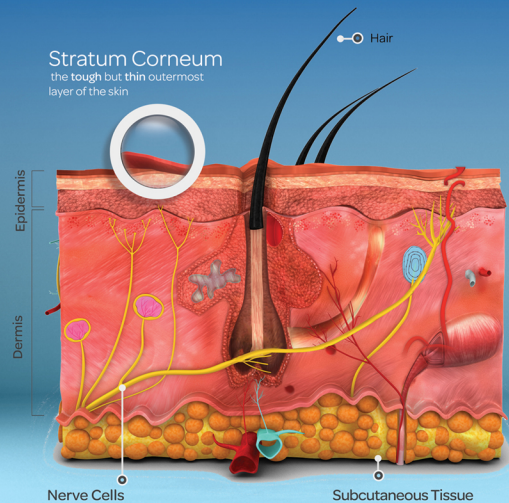


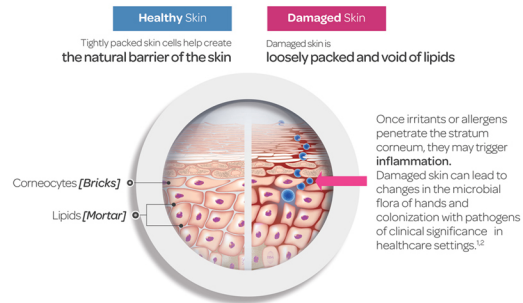
The Ultimate Guide to Healthy Hands

Healthy skin is your first line of defense



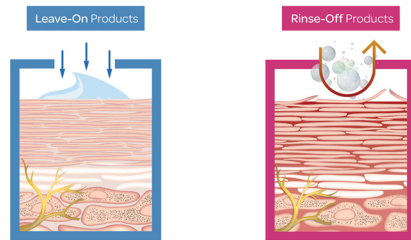
THE STRUCTURE OF THE STRATUM CORNEUM

The **Stratum Corneum** looks like a **brick wall**. The Bricks are the **Corneocytes** (dried out skin cells that are ready to be shed). The Mortar is the **Intercellular Matrix**, which is composed of lipids. This brick wall structure makes the skin impermeable to foreign invaders, such as irritants, allergens, and microorganisms.



IMPACT OF SANITIZER vs. SOAP

Using a properly formulated hand sanitizer and soap are essential for promoting the health of your skin.



Alcohol-based hand rubs are **leave-on** products and **do not physically remove skin lipids**. These products contain conditioners and emollients which can **benefit the skin**.

Hand washes are **rinse-off** products and by their very nature, **can reduce the skin's oils and lipids** creating pathways to deeper layers of the skin where **nerve cells** are located which leads to **potential nerve exposure**.

The Cycle of Skin Damage

How the Overuse of Soap and Water May Damage Skin¹



Preventing the Cycle of Skin Damage

Best Practices for Skin Care

- Use alcohol-based hand rubs as preferred method** when hands are not visibly soiled or contaminated.
- Minimize handwashing with soap and water**, except when hands are visibly soiled or contaminated and when specified by your hospital policy.
- Use lukewarm or cooler water** (not hot), wet hands before applying soap and rinse well.
- Pat hands gently** when drying with a paper towel. Vigorous rubbing can irritate skin.
- Do not don gloves** when hands are still wet with hand sanitizer or water. This can trap moisture underneath the gloves and irritate skin.
- Use a facility-approved lotion frequently** during your shift. Use lotions that are compatible with the provided hand hygiene products and gloves.
- Protect your skin when you're not working, too!** Wear gloves in cold, dry weather, use a mild soap at home and apply a thick, high quality lotion, especially before going to sleep.

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1. Larson CL, Hughes CA, Fink AJ, Bopps PP, Cugnet EJ, Barbas AP. Changes in hand hygiene use and skin damage on hands of healthcare personnel. Am J Infect Control. 2008;33(1):22-27.
2. Bopps PP, Larson CL, Hughes CA, Fink AJ, Barbas AP, Cugnet EJ. Changes in hand hygiene use and skin damage on hands of healthcare personnel. Am J Infect Control. 2008;33(1):22-27.
3. Larson CL, Hughes CA, Fink AJ, Bopps PP, Cugnet EJ, Barbas AP. Changes in hand hygiene use and skin damage on hands of healthcare personnel. Am J Infect Control. 2008;33(1):22-27.
4. Larson CL, Hughes CA, Fink AJ, Bopps PP, Cugnet EJ, Barbas AP. Changes in hand hygiene use and skin damage on hands of healthcare personnel. Am J Infect Control. 2008;33(1):22-27.