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Research Article

**HAND WASHING TECHNIQUE PRACTICED BY
HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS ACCORDING TO WHO
PROTOCOL IN A TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL****¹Dr. Nazir Hassan Mehdi, ²Dr. Hilal Ahmad, ³Dr. Muhammad Hussain**¹Medical Officer, Rural Health Centre, Behal, Punjab.²Medical Officer, Basic Health Unit, Tehsil Kotli Sattian, Punjab.³PGT General Medicine, Peshawar Medical College and Affiliated Hospitals
(Mercy Teaching Hospital, Peshawar)**Article Received:** October 2020 **Accepted:** November 2020 **Published:** December 2020**Abstract:**

Background: In this modern era communicable diseases have increased dramatically, which has also played role in the morbidity and mortality of preventable diseases. Communicable disease like COVID-19 has effected human race financially too, in fact worst recession in modern human history. Hand washing alone has decreased the spread of communicable disease significantly. Studies have shown that hand wash with soap has proved to be effective in eliminating germs and has significantly decreased hospitalisation.

Materials and Methods: It is a cross-sectional study which covered 100 people. Only doctors and nurses were included in this study. The professionals who had skin allergies were not included. A total of 100 healthcare professionals including 40 nurses and 60 doctors hand washing technique was observed.

Results: 17 out of 40 doctors i.e. 42% and 9 out of 35 nurses i.e. 25.71% wash their hands according to WHO hand washing protocol.

Conclusions: Hand Washing has to be practiced frequently in hospitals setups to improve patient's general health.

Keywords: Health care Professional, Communicable disease, Sanitizer, Allergies.

Corresponding author:**Dr. Nazir Hassan Mehdi,**

Medical Officer, Rural Health Centre, Behal, Punjab.

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INTRODUCTION:

Hand washing is a term which is used for hand hygiene, which if practiced according to the protocol helps prevent spread of vast contagious diseases. It's done by removing germs, dirt, and soil from our hands by applying soaps or without its application. [1] It's an easy but very effective way which helps spread of communicable diseases. According to new research Covid-19 spread can be stopped by simply washing our hands for 20 seconds according to WHO protocol.[2][3]

Objective: In the background of Tertiary care hospital, to access and observe the hand washing habits of healthcare professionals.

METHODOLOGY:

A cross-sectional study was conducted by observing the habit and practice of hand washing among the healthcare workers in Tertiary Care Hospital. The professionals who had skin allergies were not included. Health Care professionals were observed to collect this data. Hand washing technique according to the protocol of World Health Organization (WHO) is taught to almost all the health care professionals and posters of hand washing techniques are displayed. They are also observed to dry their hands, as wet hands carry greater chance of contamination.

MATERIAL AND METHOD:

Hand Hygiene is a simple act of washing hands to remove pathogens with soap or equivalent agent. However, sanitizer containing alcohol and water (60 v/v) in case of unavailability of soap and water. Hand washing for at least 20 seconds is recommended by World Health Organization (WHO).

DISCUSSION:

Hand hygiene is a practice of washing hands only with tap water or with the usage of some antimicrobial soap. [1] WHO states that "hand washing starts by wetting hands, then soap is applied on hands and rubbed palm to palm. After that soap is rubbed from palm to dorsum of both hands which is followed by rubbing area in between digits. Afterwards both thumbs are rubbed by clasping it in opposite hands and lastly nails of both hands are rubbed on palms alternately. Hands are then washed with running water and dried by single use towel. In

the end tap is turned off by the towel." [4] Hand Hygiene is a practice of washing hands either with soap or its equivalent to remove dirt, greese and pathogens. Sanitisers should be used if there is no water or soap available. It should be a common practice among physicians and healthcare workers to limit the spread of contagious diseases. It helps to prevent many infectious diseases like diarrhea and cholera that are transmitted through feco-oral route. If this simple and most effective practice isn't properly adopted by healthcare professionals, then many preventable diseases can be cause of our health system burden.

RESULTS:

A total of 75 healthcare professionals were observed, of which 35 were nurses and 40 were doctors. 17 out of 40 doctors' i.e. 42% and 9 out of 35 nurses i.e. 25.71% wash their hands according to WHO hand washing protocol. Doctors have been found to wash their hand more often than nurses. While the remaining were not following the WHO hand washing protocol.

CONCLUSION:

Despite having knowledge of the WHO hand washing technique and the availability of sanitizers at bedside, low compliance was found in health care professional. To correct this issue of non-compliance a Multi-disciplinary approach can be used. But as frequent hand washing can lead to skin damage due to peeling off of the skin therefore, proper care should be taken.

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