POLICY STATEMENT:

It is the policy of the TTUHSC School of Medicine to maintain a safe environment for patients, visitors, and employees.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all TTUHSC Ambulatory clinics operated through its Schools.

PROCEDURE:

1. **Basic Hand Washing (soap and water):**
   a. When soap and water should be used:
      1) Hands are visibly soiled (dirty).
      2) Hands are visibly contaminated with blood or body fluids.
      3) Before and after eating.
      4) After using restroom.
   b. How to wash hands effectively with soap and water
      1) Wet hands first with warm (avoid HOT) water.
      2) Apply 3 to 5 ml (about the size of a quarter) of soap to hands.
      3) Rub hands together for 15 seconds.
      4) Cover all surfaces of the hand and fingers with soap using friction.
      5) Rinse hands with water and dry thoroughly and
      6) Use paper towels after drying hand to turn off faucet.

2. **When alcohol based hand rubs should be used:**
   a. Alcohol base hand wash should be available in every patient care area of each clinic and used whenever soap and water wash is impractical.
      1) Before having direct contact with a patient,
      2) After having direct contact with a patient’s skin,
      3) After having direct contact with body fluids, wounds or broken skin,
4) After touching equipment or furniture near the patient,
5) After removing gloves.

b. How to affectively use alcohol based hand rubs:
   1) Apply 1.5 to 3 ml (about the size of quarter) of alcohol rub to the palm of the hand and rub together.
   2) Cover all surfaces of your hands and fingers including areas around/under fingernails.
   3) Rub hands together until alcohol dries (15 to 25 seconds). Make sure hands are completely dry prior to putting on gloves.
   4) Wash hands with soap and water when you feel a “build up” of emollients on your hands.

   *NOTE: The use of hand sanitizers is not in lieu of hand washing with soap and warm, running water. Hand sterilizers containing 60-80 ethanol alcohol or isopropanol with equivalent sanitizing strength may be used as an adjunct to proper hand washing.

For more information on proper hand hygiene, see TTUHSC Safety Services Employee Refresher Training, Infectious Disease Exposure video.

CERTIFICATION:

This policy was approved by the Council of Deans on November 3, 2011.