

HealthyLife®

LETTER



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Hand washing or sanitizer?

If there's one habit that's good for everyone's health, it's hand washing. But is hand sanitizer just as good as soap and water? Maybe not. Hand sanitizers:

- Do not get rid of all germs.
- Don't work well when hands have dirt or grease on them.
- May not remove dangerous chemicals, like pesticides and heavy metals.

Hand washing does all these things — when you use soap and water and scrub for at least 20 seconds.

Use hand sanitizer when you can't get soap and water. But always choose the sink and soap when you can!

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Get the facts about stuttering

Speech is an important part of communicating. Yet millions of people cope with a speech disability every day.

WHAT IS STUTTERING?

Stuttering is a problem that affects how your speech flows. People who stutter may:

- Stretch words out for too long when speaking
- Have pauses where they can't get a word out
- Repeat whole words or parts of words
- Have uncontrolled movements when speaking, such as trembling in the jaw or excessive blinking

Scientists don't fully understand why stuttering happens. But we do have plenty of facts about this speech disorder. Learn more about what it is and how you can help someone who has it.



FACT #1: Stuttering isn't related to intelligence.

Stuttering isn't a problem with being confused or less intelligent. In fact, many intelligent and successful people have dealt with this speech disorder.

FACT #2: Finishing a word or sentence for someone is not helpful.

People who don't understand stuttering may get frustrated or impatient when someone stutters. They may just want to say the word for them so they can keep talking. This is not helpful and could make stuttering worse.

FACT #3: Stuttering is not caused by stress or being tense.

Experts believe that people who stutter may have some brain differences. These differences affect how a person's brain works when they speak. But it's not caused by anxiety, stress or a mental health condition. However, being stressed could make stuttering worse for a person who already has the disorder.

FACT #4: Stuttering is more common in children.

Many children stutter while they are learning how to speak and understand others. Most of the time, children stop stuttering before they become adults. They may need help from their doctor and a speech-language pathologist. If you're concerned about your child's stuttering, talk to their pediatrician.

If you have concerns about stuttering, finding words or other speech issues, talk to your doctor about seeing a licensed speech-language pathologist.

Stress & self-harm

People deal with stress in different ways. But in some cases, stress may cause a person to harm themselves. Self-harm often shows up in the form of cutting. A person may cut themselves repeatedly with a razor blade or other sharp object. This often starts in the teenage years, but it can happen to people of all ages.

Why does it happen?

Even though cutting may hurt, it helps a person feel less stressed for a while. Teenagers may do it when they are feeling overwhelmed about school or their social life. Adults may do it when they are under pressure at work or at home.

Whatever the reason, cutting is a sign of emotional distress.

What to look for

It's not always easy to tell if someone is using self-harm. Signs that a person may be cutting include:

- Multiple cuts on the skin, usually in one area of the arms, legs or torso
- Wearing long sleeves or long pants when it's hot outside
- Having sharp objects like razors without an obvious reason
- Changes in behavior, such as being unpredictable or talking about feeling worthless

What to do

If you think your loved one or friend is cutting, offer your help and support. Don't tell them to "just stop."

In the case of your child, contact their doctor to ask for help. If it's an adult, encourage them to find a therapist or to talk to their doctor.

Source: American Academy of
Family Physicians

