

Hand hygiene program beneficial for day care centers

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(HealthDay)—An educational and hand hygiene program involving hand

sanitizer can reduce the risk for respiratory infections (RI) for children attending day care centers (DCCs), according to a study published online Oct. 8 in *Pediatrics*.

Ernestina Azor-Martinez, M.D., Ph.D., from the Distrito Sanitario de Atención Primaria in Almería, Spain, and colleagues conducted a trial involving 911 children aged 0 to 3 years attending 24 DCCs in Spain with an eight-month follow-up. DCC families were randomly assigned to two intervention groups in which education and [hand hygiene](#) measures (soap and water [SWG, 274] and hand sanitizer [HSG, 339]) were implemented or to a control group (CG, 298) that followed usual hand-washing procedures.

A total of 5,211 RI episodes were registered. The researchers found that compared with children in the CG, those in the HSG had reduced risk for RI episodes and antibiotic prescriptions (incidence rate ratios, 0.77 and 0.69, respectively). Compared with those in the HSG, children in the SWG had a higher risk for RI episodes and antibiotic prescriptions (incidence rate ratios, 1.21 and 1.31, respectively). Overall, children missed 5,186 DCC days due to RIs; a significantly lower percentage of days absent was seen in the HSG versus the CG and SWG.

"Hand hygiene programs that include [hand sanitizer](#) and educational measures for DCC staff, children, and parents reduce absent days, RIs, and [antibiotic prescriptions](#) for these infections in [children](#) at DCCs," the authors write.

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