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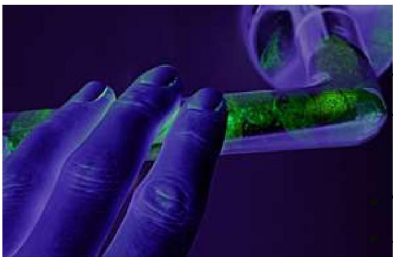
## News story

## Public information campaign focuses on handwashing

Washing hands for 20 seconds is central to the expanded public awareness campaign to prevent and slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Published 4 March 2020

From: [Department of Health and Social Care](#)



This phase of the campaign focuses on the importance of washing your hands more often, especially:

when you get to work or arrive home  
after you blow your nose, cough or sneeze

- before you eat or handle food

You should wash your hands for 20 seconds, using soap and water or hand sanitiser.

You should also cough or sneeze into tissues before binning them.

The campaign will appear in the print media, radio, online and in public places, including billboards.

It has been brought forward in response to the current global situation.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

The UK is a world-leader in preparing for and managing disease outbreaks and I have every confidence in our nation's ability to respond to the threat of COVID-19.

We all have a role to play in stopping this disease and that's what this expanded campaign is all about – making sure the public knows exactly what they should be doing to keep themselves and others safe. Washing hands regularly is the single most important thing that an individual can do.

Public safety remains our top priority. The government and the NHS are working 24/7 to fight this virus. It's imperative that everyone follows clinical advice by contacting NHS 111, and not going to A&E if you develop symptoms.