

**WSGW RADIO PRESENTATION**  
**Smartphones and Hand Washing**  
**August 28, 2018**

Do you use your smartphone, tablet, or laptop to look at recipes while you are cooking? Did it ever occur to you that you could be exposing your food and possibly yourself to the bacteria that these devices may harbor?

In a 2016 Food Safety Survey, scientists at the FDA who study consumer food safety behavior explored this idea by evaluating how frequently these devices are used in the kitchen. The next step is to determine if there is any danger of contamination from these devices while preparing food.

We take these devices everywhere – into work, the store, the bathroom, the gym, and many other places.

The survey found that 49% of consumers use devices such as smartphone or tablets while preparing food. Of those, only 37% wash their hands with soap and water after touching the device. In contrast, 85% of those surveyed reported washing their hands after handling raw meat, chicken, or fish.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hand washing is the most effective way to reduce the spread of infectious diseases. The CDC says it takes from 15 to 20 seconds to effectively kill germs; the study found that, on average, people are washing their hands for only 6 seconds.

**Wash your hands the right way:**

Here's how to do it:

1. Wet your hands with clean running water (warm or cold) and apply soap.
2. Rub your hands together to make a lather and scrub them well; be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Continue rubbing your hands for at least 20 seconds. Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry.

**What about hand sanitizers?**

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to reduce the number of germs on them. But, if soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in some situations, but sanitizers do **not** eliminate all types of germs.

Always use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

[www.saginawpublichealth.org](http://www.saginawpublichealth.org)

Sources: [www.upi.com](http://www.upi.com)  
[www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov)  
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