CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2005 PROJECT SUMMARY

Name(s)
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Project Number
J1319

Project Title
Which Method of Handwashing Removes the Most Bacteria?

Abstract

Objectives/Goals
To determine which method of handwashing, out of the three used, removes the most bacteria from your hands.

Methods/Materials
The three methods used were washing with plain water, soap & water, and hand sanitizer. I used 10 test subjects and had each of them wash their hands with each method. After washing I had them press their fingers into petri dishes, then monitored the growth in the petri dishes over a period of several days. I counted the bacteria colonies from each petri dish of each of the methods and came up with the average for each method.

Results
The soap & water method had the least amount of growth overall.

Conclusions/Discussion
I thought that the hand sanitizer would have the least growth, but it turned out to be the soap & water. I think that the length of time rubbing the hands together and the fact that you rinse away whatever was loosened by the rubbing played a big factor.

Summary Statement
My project is about finding the best way to wash your hands so that you effectively remove bacteria from them.

Help Received
Mother took some pictures; teacher got petri dishes; neighbors were test subjects