Importance of Handwashing in the Prevention of Cross-Infection

Faculty of Nursing

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The Importance of Handwashing in the Prevention of Cross-Infection

The introduction is the first paragraph. You do not need to write the word “introduction” at the top of the second page; repeat the full title as it is on the title page but not in bold. Notice that the heading is centred with major content words capitalized (Importance of Handwashing for the Prevention of Cross-Infection). This first section should conclude with a statement such as: The following paper will examine microflora of the hands and handwashing agents.

Microflora of the Hands

This second section focuses on the microflora of the hands. The major content words are capitalized in the above heading, “Microflora of the Hands” and in bold. To show the reader why the two types of microflora of the hands are explained in detail, the student might write: Exploring resident and transient flora allows health care professionals to understand the dangers of not washing.

Resident Flora

The writer used a second level of heading, “Resident Flora”, because there are at least three sentences on this topic. Two types of resident flora, coagulase negative staphylococci and diptheroids are examined in further detail. Each of the third level of headings below must be followed by at least one paragraph. Each paragraph should have a minimum of three sentences.

Coagulase negative staphylococci. When using a third level of heading, the heading is indented five to seven spaces from the left hand margin. Only the first letter of the first word of this level of heading is capitalized (Coagulase negative staphylococci). This level of heading is in bold and ends with a period.

Diptheroids. Also notice that the text begins one space after the period. In other words, unlike the two previous kinds of headings, you do not go to the next line and indent. With this third level of heading, the indent comes before the heading.
IMPORTANCE OF HANDWASHING

Transient Flora

Although it is not necessary to include a sentence such as: “In order to reduce the risk of contamination, nurses should be aware of transient flora including: escherichia coli, pseudomonas spp, and staphylococcus” on the line after the Transient Flora heading, this kind of introductory statement helps the reader anticipate how many ideas/subsections you will present under the topic of transient flora. More importantly, this statement helps the reader understand why (or how) the student will provide more explanation on these subtopics.

Escherichia coli. One of the dangers of using this third level of heading is that some students think they need to have a heading for each and every paragraph in their paper. This simply is not true. In fact, if you use too many headings in a short paper, your professor might think you are trying to use up space on the page because you have very little to say about the given topic.

Pseudomonas spp. If one of your headings falls on the last line of the page, move the heading to the top of the next page. Put another way, you should avoid ending a page with any level of heading. It is appropriate to leave the last line of the page empty when this occurs.

Staphylococcus aureus. Consider ending each major section of the paper with a sentence that links one major topic (kinds of microflora) with the next major topic in the paper (choosing a handwashing agent). For example: While it is important for a nurse to understand the difference between the two kinds of microflora of the hands, choosing the appropriate handwashing agent is integral.

Choosing the Appropriate Handwashing Agent

This next section of the paper has not been explained by the writer; however, with the text missing from the paper, it is clear that headings (a) help the reader organize his/her ideas, and (b) assist the writer read through the text more effectively and efficiently. Moreover, an equal
number of headings are not required in each section. For instance, **Soaps** does not have a third level of heading, while **Antiseptic Agents** has several third level headings.

**Soaps**

**Antiseptic Agents**

- **Chlorhexidine gluconate.**
- **Iodophors.**
- **Alcohols.**
- **Triclosan.**
- **Hexachlorphane.**

**Conclusion**

In the conclusion, the writer will restate the main focus of the paper by summarizing the two kinds of microflora of the hands, resident flora and transient flora including the main features of *Escherichia coli*, *Pseudomonas spp.*, and *Staphylococcus*. Moreover, the writer will summarize and the two common handwashing agents, soaps and antiseptic agents including any relevant information about chlorhexidine gluconate, iodophors, alcohols, triclosan, and hexachlorphane. The author will conclude with a final comment which is not from the research literature. Notice that the word conclusion above this paragraph is in **bold**.

**Instructions**

**First Level of Heading**

- the headings are centred and in **bold**
- the major content words are capitalized in the headings ("at, in, for, the," are not major content words, for instance)
- paragraphs are indented 5-7 spaces (1.27 cm or 0.5 inches)

**Second Level of Heading**

- the heading is at the left hand margin and in **bold**
- paragraph begins on the next line and is indented
- there may be multiple second level headings in a section
Third Level of Heading
- indented before the heading and in **bold**
- capitalize only on the first letter of the first word
- end the heading with a period.
- begin the paragraph one space after the period which ends the heading