



Doctor's orders

Description

The saying goes, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." But to improve health outcomes and avoid adverse events, we also need knowledge.

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The Health Policy Unit issues regular updates on health and wellness matters that could affect us and our loved ones. In this publication, Dr Nkateko Msimeki and Dr Nicholas Downey address two health and wellness concerns, hand washing and testicular cancer.

Prevention begins by washing hands

[World Hand Hygiene Day](#) (5 May) emphasises the importance of handwashing as a vital preventive measure against diseases. In South Africa, communicable diseases such as diarrhoea, respiratory infections, and hospital-acquired infections pose substantial challenges to healthcare. These infections

are often exacerbated by hygiene lapses.

Proper hand hygiene can reduce hospital infections by 50%, alleviating systemic healthcare pressures, improving patient outcomes, and trimming costs.

World Hand Hygiene Day reframes handwashing as a collective strategy, not just an individual habit, to shift priorities from treatment to prevention.

Click [here](#) to read Dr Nkateko's full article.

Prevention begins by washing hands

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[Testicular Cancer Awareness](#) Month, observed globally in April, aims to raise awareness of the importance of early detection through self-examinations, as this has been shown to significantly improve treatment outcomes and save lives.

According to the 2023 National Cancer Registry from the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD), approximately one in every 1 700 men in South Africa will develop testicular cancer in their lifetime. Fortunately, it is highly treatable, with over 95% of men surviving – especially if detected early.

Click [here](#) to read Dr Nicholas' full article, including risk factors, signs and symptoms, and how to perform a self-examination.

Category

1. Our Wellness

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