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Washing Away the Fear

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Narrative Oncology

The COVID pandemic has transformed the radiation oncology department into a place of fear for the safety of our patients, our colleagues, and ourselves. Every day we review updates on how to decrease the chance of infection and work to change behaviors in our work routine.

Frequent hand sanitation is our first line of defense. Every door handle, keyboard, mouse and clinic routing form is a potential source of transmission. Applying hand sanitizer has become a ritual that gets us through the day. We do it alone, we do it with others, we add more product and lather more vigorously when the fear is high but use just a dab and finish quickly when we are feeling brave.

We know this crisis will pass but it will be difficult to encounter a container of hand sanitizer again without stopping for a quick shot- rituals that get us through tough times may be a source of comfort forever.