

Caregiver Assistance News

“Caring for You - Caring for Others”

Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

Serving Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike,
Ross, Scioto and Vinton Counties in Ohio

www.aaa7.org **Helping You Age Better!**



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Clean It - Food, Hands, Equipment

Tips To Be Safe

Standard or Universal Precautions are practices designed to reduce the spread of disease. They protect you, the caregiver, from bacteria or viruses carried by the person in your care. They also protect the person in your care from any germs you may be carrying.

- Disposable gloves should be worn anytime you might be exposed to body fluids, for instance, when assisting with toileting; disposing of Depends®; wiping a nose or mouth; cleaning up vomit, urine or feces; cleaning or bandaging injuries; and when cleaning up soiled surfaces in the bathroom and bedroom.

- Face masks are recommended if you are or have recently been sick with a cold, the flu or other illness.

- Dispose of needles, glucose sticks and other sharp items in a hard plastic sharps disposal box.

- Don't share items like cups, eating utensils, thermometers, toothbrushes, hairbrushes, cosmetics, razors, or eyeglasses.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing or coughing and dispose of the tissue immediately. No tissues? Cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow.

- Keep wounds clean and covered with a bandage until healed.

- Clean and disinfect laundry soiled with body fluids, kitchen surfaces, bedpans and commodes.

Other personal protective equipment includes gowns and eye protection (safety glasses), which are generally used to protect the caregiver from splashes. These are important when giving wound care and when doing major cleanup jobs.

Source:

CDC; Veterans Administration.

Bloodborne pathogens are germs that pass from person to person through blood or any other body fluid. Illnesses spread through



body fluids - like mucus, blood, pus or drainage from sores, vomit, urine, and fecal matter. They include HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, the flu, staph and strep infections, the common cold, and others.



Seasons Greetings!

from the Area Agency
on Aging District 7

The Power is In Your Hands: Wash Up, Stop Germs

Handwashing is the best way to prevent colds, the flu, and many other infections! That's because the combination of soap, water and rubbing flushes germs away.

When to Wash?

- Before and after work, and as soon as you come home from being in public.
- Before and after using disposable gloves.
- After handling dirty items.
- After using the restroom or assisting a person in the restroom or with Depends®.
- Before preparing or serving food (especially raw meat, fish and eggs).
- After any contact with body fluids.
- After handling pets, their bowls or litter boxes.
- When your hands are dirty, as from gardening or cleaning.

Hot or Cold?

Hot water will cut through grease and grime faster, but can irritate skin. Cool water and regular soap do just as well in making hands germ-free.

Dryer or Towels?

How you dry your hands after washing isn't as important as making sure your hands are really dry. Dryers take longer than most people are willing to spend. Disposable paper towels are best - they're cleaner than reusing a cloth hand towel.

Hand Sanitizer or Soap?

Soap and water do the best job at

cleaning hands, but when that's not possible, alcohol-based sanitizers containing at least 60 percent alcohol are a good substitute. Sanitizers kill bacteria and viruses, but not spores. In addition, they do not work well at removing dirt or grime, so if your hands are visibly dirty, wash them instead. Be sure to use enough: rub about a dime-sized amount over all surfaces of hands and fingers until dry.

Antibacterial or Regular Soap?

Regular soap and water are all you need. Soaps that contain antibacterial agents (like triclosan) kill or inhibit bacteria, but may add to



the growing problem of bacterial resistance, which is causing many antibiotics to become ineffective

Source:

CDC; Berkeley Wellness Alerts

Sing Happy Birthday!

Singing "Happy Birthday to You" twice while you wash your hands may help you keep celebrating birthdays with those you love! That's the time it takes - about 20 seconds - to really clean your hands using soap and water.



Holidays Can Trigger Anxiety in People with Dementia

Even in the early stages of dementia, the extra stimulation of the holidays can make the person upset, agitated and confused. What to do? Simplify activities as much as possible. Continue to involve the person with dementia in celebrations, for as long as he or she is still able to participate. Learn to recognize when he or she is not enjoying things and be prepared to change plans. Sometimes, simply providing a quiet room and some quiet time is all that's needed.



"Change is not made without inconvenience, even from worse to better." - Samuel Johnson

Taking Care of Yourself - Make a Joyful Noise!

Singing can keep you healthy!

Asthma: Singing helps people with asthma and bronchitis because of the deep breathing. Also, because a variety of muscles, such as the diaphragm, receive a workout.

Immune System: Since singing makes most people happy, and happiness reduces stress and makes your immune system work better, it is also a good way to keep healthy, especially during the winter cold and flu season.

Aging: People who sing in choirs report better health and fewer falls than non-singers.

Alzheimer's: Singing familiar songs and learning new ones - especially with others - builds self-esteem and fights loneliness. Singing probably can't prevent Alzheimer's, but it may delay the onset of memory problems in some people.

Sociability: More people take part in choral singing than in any other performing art. And most singers say that singing in a chorus builds social confidence.

Source: Berkeley Wellness Alerts



Live Life Laughing



As Phyllis Diller said, always serve chocolate cake because it doesn't show the dirt!

Don't Fall - Be Safe!



Wear appropriate footwear and be careful of transitions like curb to sidewalk. Use approved walkways. No shortcuts!



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Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. serves the following counties in Ohio: Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton.

Services are rendered on a non-discriminatory basis. Those interested in learning more about the services provided through the

Area Agency on Aging District 7 can call toll-free at 1-800-582-7277. Here, individuals can talk directly with a nurse or social worker who will assist them with information surrounding the programs and services that are available to best serve their needs. The Agency can also be reached via e-mail at info@aaa7.org.

Food Safety

Older adults and those who may be “run down,” such as caregivers, are especially susceptible to illness from unsafe food, so be extra careful when storing, preparing and cooking meals.

- Wash your hands (and the person’s in your care) with soap before preparing or serving food.
- Always wash cutting boards and utensils with hot soapy water after they come in contact with raw meat, poultry and seafood.



- Disinfect the sink and kitchen counters with a solution of 1-teaspoon chlorine bleach per quart of water. Mix a new solution each week to assure its effectiveness.
- Check labels and discard all foods that are past the expiration date.
- Cook all red meat thoroughly to an internal temperature of 160° F.
- Place cooked food on a clean plate - never use the one which held the raw meat or seafood.
- Store wrapped raw meat, seafood and poultry on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator so they do not “bleed” onto other foods.
- Keep hot foods at 140° F or warmer and cold foods at 40° F or colder.
- Serve eggs with firm yolks; avoid using raw eggs in other foods or drinks.