



Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

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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!**



MAY 2018

Standard Precautions - Hygiene

It's not possible to clean or disinfect every surface you have contact with, but keeping hands clean is the first line of defense for keeping infection-causing germs from reaching your mouth, nose or eyes, where they can make you, and then others, sick.



Wash your hands. It's the single most important way to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Proper hand-washing requires soap and water. By rubbing, soap breaks down the grease and dirt that carry most germs. We all should know the importance of washing after using the toilet, yet less than 50 percent of people actually do it—and almost no one does it properly.

When to wash your hands: always after toileting, after handling raw foods, whenever you've been in contact with anything or anyone "suspicious," and periodically throughout the day.

Our bodies naturally carry germs on them. Most of these germs are harmless, and some are even essential to our health; however, germs from other sources, such as raw meat, can also survive on hands, and these can be easily transferred to other surfaces, increasing the risk of cross-contamination. Because our hands are in frequent contact with our eyes, nose and mouth, it's easy to see how dirty hands spread germs and illnesses, such as the common cold, flu and food poisoning.

As important as it is to properly wash your hands, it's equally important to dry them correctly, too. The bacteria and viruses that are left on your hands after even a good washing thrive on moist skin, so dry your hands thoroughly after each wash.

Hot-air hand dryers are not always the best way to dry hands, primarily because most people stop drying before their hands are really dry. Do not wipe damp hands on your clothes to dry them. The most effective way of reducing hand-borne bacteria is to dry thoroughly washed hands on clean paper towels. Hand sanitizer gels can be used to kill germs, but they should not always replace hand washing. Hand sanitizers can build up on skin, so wash your hands the regular way— with soap and warm water—after every fourth use of a sanitizer.

Source: Centers for Disease Control

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 trained Resource Specialist 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.

Safety Tips - Health Basics for the Kitchen

The dirtiest place in your house isn't your bathroom—it's your kitchen sink.

Cleaner kitchen tips:

- Don't let food linger on countertops before cooking and serving it.
- Clear the sink of dishes and pans and use different towels to dry hands and cookware.
- Keep cutting boards free of nicks and grooves where bacteria can grow.
- Keep your refrigerator working properly, and on a cold setting.
- Keep pets off countertops and dining tables.
- Damp dish towels breed bacteria. Keep them clean and dry, or use paper towels.
- Use dish rags, not sponges. Rags dry faster and you can launder them in hot water.



Hand Washing - Do it Right!

Hand washing is the single most important way to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

If the person in your care has an infection, use a bottle-dispensed antimicrobial soap.

1. Rub your hands for at least 30 seconds (about the time it takes to sing Happy Birthday slowly) to produce lots of lather. Lather-up away from running water so the lather is not washed away.
2. Use a nailbrush on your nails; keep your nails trimmed.
3. Wash front and back of hands, between fingers, and at least two inches up your wrists.
4. Rinse well under warm running water. Repeat the process.
5. Dry your hands on a clean cloth or paper towel.



Source: WebMD; Centers for Disease Control

Handling Soiled Laundry

Follow these tips to make soiled laundry handling safe:

- Always use gloves when handling soiled laundry.
- Carry dirty linens away from your body. Use a basket.
- Never shake soiled linens. (Germs may contaminate the floor and be spread throughout the house on the soles of shoes.)
- Use a leak-proof plastic bag, tied shut, for linen that contains body fluids or waste.
- Bag soiled laundry in the same place where it is used. Don't carry it to another room.
- Wash soiled linen separately from other clothes.
- Fill the machine with hot water, for whites add ¼ cup bleach and detergent, rinse twice, and then dry.
- Clean the washer by running it through a cycle with one-cup bleach or other disinfectant.

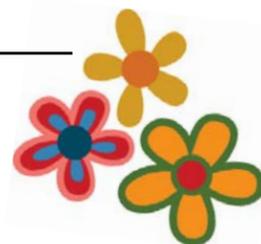


Stop the Spread

When cleaning, work from the cleanest to the dirtiest area and always wear gloves when giving personal care.

Memory Care

Hand washing is often an issue in dementia care. Guide the person in your care to the sink and tell them step-by-step how to wash their hands. Explain what you are going to do next. Watch the flow of water so it is not too strong, as it can be frightening for a person with dementia.



TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Physical Activity

Balance your physical activities and food consumption. Physical activity helps you to reduce weight, slows down bone loss, controls diabetes and cholesterol levels, lessens the risk associated with some types of cancer, depression, and anxiety—and helps in preventing heart disease. Start by walking for about 10 minutes three times a week. Start slowly and increase the length of time gradually. Choose activities that you enjoy. Always check with your doctor before starting an exercise program.



Source: US Department of Health and Human Services

Upcoming Wellness Classes

- Gallia County - Starting August 7th (Falls Management)
- Jackson County - Starting June 4th (Diabetes Empowerment)
- Jackson County - Starting July 2nd (Chronic Disease Self-Management)
- Jackson County - Starting August 7th (Falls Management)
- Lawrence County - Starting August 1st (Chronic Disease Self-Management)
- Lawrence County - Starting August 6th (Chronic Pain Self-Management)
- Pike County - Starting July 6th (Chronic Pain Self-Management)
- Pike County - Starting August 1st (Chronic Disease Self-Management)
- Pike County - Starting August 3rd (Tools for Caregivers)
- Scioto County - Starting July 11th (Diabetes Self-Management)
- Scioto County - Starting August 6th (Chronic Pain Self-Management)

Call 1-800-582-7277, extension 247 or 284, to learn more or to register. Log on to www.aaa7.org to download our 2018 Wellness Calendar to learn more about wellness classes provided through the AAA7 to those age 60 and over at no cost.