

HIV: Infection Control

Guidelines to prevent the spread of HIV

This handout provides guidelines to follow to help prevent the spread of HIV and other infections. Everyone should follow these guidelines, including those who are living with HIV infection, those who care for children living with HIV infection and those who come in contact with blood or body fluids that contain blood. We all want to be careful so that we do not spread germs to others or get germs from others.

Why is handwashing important?

Handwashing helps to prevent infections and the spread of infections. It is the cornerstone of infection control. Wash hands even more often if you are ill.

When should hands be washed?

Hands should always be washed before:

- Preparing, serving or eating food

Hands should always be washed after:

- Using the bathroom
- Changing a diaper
- Helping a child use the bathroom
- Wiping a runny nose
- Sneezing or coughing (if your child forgets to sneeze or cough into her elbow)
- Using a tissue
- Coming into contact with blood or body fluids

Hands should always be washed after:

- Gloves are worn to handle blood or body fluids or to pick up items touched by blood or body fluids (such as a Kleenex)

Hands should be washed before and after:

- Giving first aid



What are some handwashing tips?

- Use colorful soap made for kids. Some come in fun scents or shapes that make washing hands fun.
- Wash hands with your child. Let her practice by washing your hands to show you she knows how.
- Have your child sing a favorite short song (the ABC song works well) while soaping up. This helps to make sure she takes enough time to do a good job.
- Carry a small bottle of waterless hand sanitizer, like Purell, for washing hands on the bus, in the car or during outings.

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Besides handwashing, what can I teach my child about infection control?

- Teach your child to sneeze or cough into the inside of his arm (at the elbow) instead of in his hand to help prevent the spread of germs.
- Help your child keep his fingernails short and clean.
- Tell your child to avoid biting his nails.
- Teach your child to keep his hands and fingers out of his mouth.

How do I dispose of sharp items?

- Teach your child to tell you if she sees a sharp object.
- Never pick up needles, broken glass or other sharp objects with bare hands.
- Do not put sharp objects right into the trash. Place sharp objects in a sealed container, or wrap them with care so they do not cut you or someone else.

What about other litter?

- Do not pick up or touch litter that may contain body fluids. This includes Band-Aids, tissues or feminine hygiene products (such as pads or tampons, etc.). Teach your child to not touch these items.
- If gloves are not available and an item must be picked up, use some other form of barrier, such as a piece of paper or a few tissues. Then, wash hands.
- Wrap used sanitary pads in layers of paper towel or toilet paper and place them in a proper container. In public restrooms, there is almost always a special container for these items in the stall.

- In most cases, a used tampon can be flushed down the toilet. In some places, this is not allowed. If that is the case, wrap it in layers of paper towel or toilet paper and throw it away.

What if my child gets a cut or has a nosebleed?

- Teach your child to attend to his own first aid needs. Young children can learn to wash their skin and apply a bandage to a small scrape.
- Wear gloves whenever you handle blood or items with blood on them. Teach your child how to put gloves on and to use them whenever he does a task that involves touching blood, even his own blood.
- Teach your child that if he begins to bleed while playing or doing sports to stop right away. The cut should be cleaned and bandaged and clothes that contain blood should be removed before returning to play.
- For nosebleeds, pinch your child's nose firmly on the soft parts of both sides of the nose (above the nostrils and below the bridge of the nose) for a full 10 minutes while he is tipping his head forward. Have him lean forward and spit out any blood in his mouth. Once bleeding has stopped, clean up your child, clean yourself and remove and wash clothes that contain blood. Also, be sure to tell your child to avoid picking, rubbing or blowing his nose. If his nose starts bleeding again, pinch it firmly for another 10 minutes.
- After dealing with a cut, scrape or nosebleed, wash hands.

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What about other issues?

- If your child bites someone, wash the area right away with soap and water just as you would for any human bite wound. Then, call your child's doctor.
- Most clothing worn by someone infected with HIV can be washed with the laundry from other family members. Clothing soiled with body fluids such as blood, vomit, urine, feces or semen should be washed separately.
- For spills of body fluids:
 - On surfaces such as floors, counters, bathtubs, etc., wear disposable gloves and clean up the spill with paper towels or disposable rags. Then, clean the area with a mixture of 10 parts water to 1 part of disinfectant (like household bleach). Wipe the surface. Let it air dry. Place all of the used towels or rags in a leakproof container, such as a plastic bag, and place it in an outdoor trash container.
 - For skin contact, wash with soap under running water for at least 10 seconds.
 - For spills on bedding or other items that can be washed, follow the same instructions as for clothing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Your child's health care provider
- Visit these Web sites:
 - www.kidshealth.org
 - www.pedaids.org
 - www.seattlechildrens.org
- Read our handouts on:
 - *HIV: Children 0 to 2 years old*
 - *HIV: Children 3 to 4 years old*
 - *HIV: Children 5 to 7 years old*
 - *HIV: Children 8 to 10 years old*
 - *HIV: Children 11 to 13 years old*
 - *HIV: Teens*
 - *HIV Facts*
 - *HIV: Making Medicines Easy*
 - *HIV: Talking to Your Child*
 - *HIV: Helping Children Understand the End of Life*
 - *HIV: Talking to Your Child About Sex*
 - *HIV: Teens and Sex*

Some of the material in this handout was adapted from the following Web sites:

www.4woman.gov/HIV/children.cfm

www.aids.org

Funds to develop this patient and family education material were provided by a grant from the Foster Foundation.

Disclaimer: The inclusion of any Web site link (or resource accessed through a link) does not imply endorsement by Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center. Seek the advice of your child's health care provider before you act or rely upon any information from these resources.

Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Please call Marketing Communications at (206) 987-5205.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Children's Hospital. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's health care provider.