

# **NORTHERN INTER-TRIBAL HEALTH AUTHORITY**

## **Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines**

**For**

**Community Members**



**Developed by the**

**Public Health Unit (PHU)**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	3
1. What are germs? .....	4
2. How can germs infect us? .....	6
3. Prevention.....	12
4. What is Infection Prevention and Control? .....	14
5. Hand washing.....	15
6. Hand sanitizers .....	17
7. Cough Etiquette .....	19
8. Antibiotic Resistance.....	20
9. Housekeeping at home.....	21
10. Housekeeping in community settings .....	24
11. Infection control at daycare centres and schools .....	25
12. Kitchen food safety at home and at community gatherings .....	27
13. Food safety for camping and picnicking .....	30
14. Infection control tips for hunters and fishermen .....	32
15. Large social gatherings .....	33
16. Illnesses in the community .....	35
17. Wakes .....	36
Web posters .....	38
References .....	39

## **INTRODUCTION**

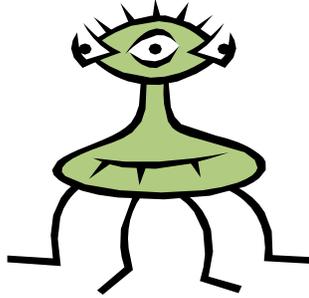
This infection control resource was originally developed by the Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority (NITHA) in response to a request formulated by community members who attended the pandemic influenza workshops and tabletops in the falls of 2004 and 2005. More recently Ebola and Zika have reminded us how important it is that community members understand what they can do to protect themselves, their families and communities. Therefore, this document was revised in 2016 to provide community members with information on preventing infections.

The document was specifically designed for community members. Different guidelines have been developed for healthcare facilities. Apart from valuable information on germs and the ways they spread, the document provides community members with suggestions and guidelines on possible ways of minimizing the transmission of infection during various day to day activities in homes, daycare centres and schools as well as at social gatherings. These suggestions and guidelines include proper hand washing, home cleaning and infection control measures at large community gatherings.

The document is designed in such a way that each section may be used separately or a stand-alone resource to be photocopied and posted as needed. To this end, the guidelines will be available in a bound version and in binders.

Information came from a variety of sources including the World Health Organization, the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the Engender Health and the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology.

## WHAT ARE GERMS?

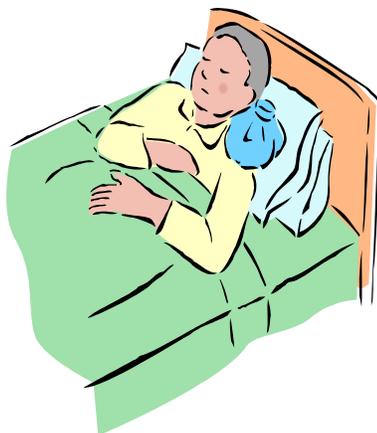


Germs can be found living on everything we come across in our daily lives. They can live in air, soil, water and even on rock. Some like to live where it is very hot while others like living in freezing cold temperatures. Germs can be found in plants, animals and the human body.

Some germs can cause disease in humans, plants or animals while others are essential for a healthy life. The relationship between germ and humans is delicate and a complex one. Most germs belong to one of four major groups:

1. Bacteria (e.g. the bug that causes Tuberculosis);
2. Viruses (e.g. the bugs the cause cold);
3. Fungi (e.g. the bug that causes athlete's foot);
4. Protozoa (e.g. the bug that causes beaver fever/Giardia).

All of these groups cause disease and are often referred to as germs, microbes, pathogens or bugs. For example, in the fall season, it is not unusual for people to say 'I have the flu bug' rather than say I have an influenza virus infection.



Diseases that spread from one person to another are responsible for more deaths worldwide than any other single cause. Scientists in the 20<sup>th</sup> century have learned more about germs than ever before and have shared this information to help stop the spread of disease from one person to another. Unfortunately, germs are very good at adapting to changes in their environment much more than people. Germs have been on earth for billions of years, and are constantly changing and challenging humans with how they can survive. The following are some ways we have seen germs adapt in our own communities:

- Many germs are now resistant to drugs that once worked very well against many diseases. This is a worldwide problem and in our communities we see it in the form of MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*);
- Our communities travel more than ever before. Therefore, we come in contact with new microbes that can cause illness. For example, our bands do business with companies from all over the world;
- Newly emerging disease is a growing global concern. For example, daily we hear of new diseases such as Avian Influenza (bird flu), Lyme disease, and West Nile Virus in people. From our experience with H1N1 we have learned that all communities need to be prepared for a communicable disease emergency.

#### Resource

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. (Sept. 2009). Understanding Microbes in Sickness and in Health. Retrieved August 09, 2016, from <http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/gpo14249/microbesbook.pdf>

## 2. HOW CAN GERMS INFECT US?

Germs can infect us in many different ways. It is important to be aware of how this happens so an individual can learn how to prevent them from spreading. Below are some of the ways germs are spread in our day to day lives.

### 2.1. Some germs travel through the air

You can pass germs on to another person through the air by coughing or sneezing. Every time we have a conversation a little bit of saliva (spit) escapes into the air. These are common ways to get viruses that can cause colds or flu or the bacterium that causes tuberculosis (TB).



Resource

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. (Sept. 2009). Understanding Microbes in Sickness and in Health. Retrieved August 09, 2016, from

<http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/gpo14249/microbesbook.pdf>

## 2.2. Close contact can pass germs from one person to another



Scientists have identified more than 500 types of germs that live in our mouths. Some of these germs keep our mouths healthy while others can cause problems like gum disease. Kissing and sharing drinks and cigarettes are some ways of passing along germs. Another way diseases can be spread is through sexual intercourse. Having close contact with another person allows germs to spread from one person to the other without them being aware of it.

### Resource

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. (Sept. 2009). Understanding Microbes in Sickness and in Health. Retrieved August 09, 2016, from <http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/gpo14249/microbesbook.pdf>

### 2.3. You can get and spread germs by touching infectious material



A common way for some germs to enter the body is through unknowingly passing feces (poop) from the hand to the mouth. Infant diarrhea is often spread this way. If daycare workers do not wash their hands between diaper changes they can easily pass an illness on to another child.

Remember, any fluid that comes out of someone's body (blood, poop, spit) should be considered as being potentially infectious. It is always best to wash your hands frequently.

Examples of areas in your home which may have many germs and need to be cleaned regularly are:

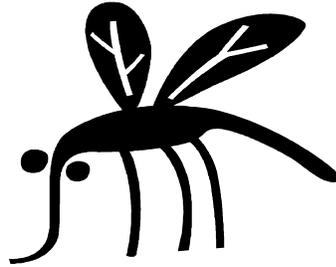
- Phones
- Computer keyboards
- Fridge doors
- Doorknobs
- TV remote controls
- Hand rails

#### Resource

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. (Sept. 2009). Understanding Microbes in Sickness and in Health. Retrieved August 09, 2016, from

<http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/gpo14249/microbesbook.pdf>

## **2.4. You can get germs from tiny critters**



Mosquitoes and ticks can be carriers of illness. In Saskatchewan, mosquitoes can carry West Nile Virus and Ticks can spread Lyme disease. Our best protection is to avoid mosquito and tick bites by keeping grass short, using insect repellent (bug spray) and wearing long pants and sleeves.

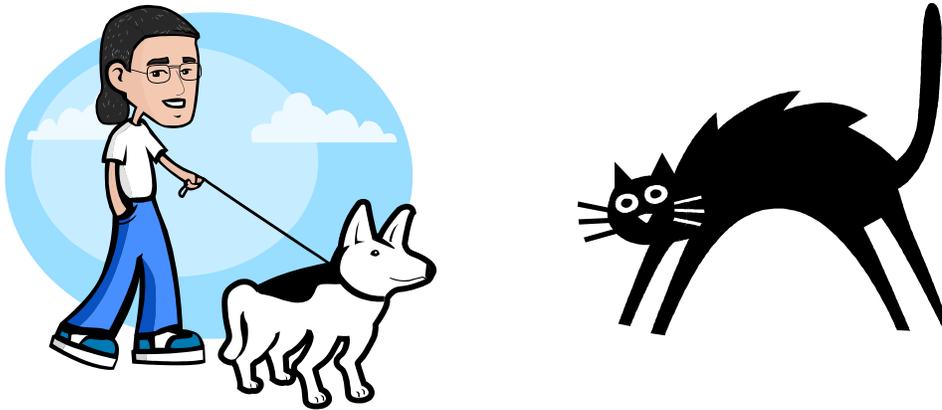
## **2.5. A healthy person can carry germs and pass them onto others**

People can look healthy but be carrying an illness that can easily be passed on to someone else. Frequently, people can be passing on the flu to others a few days before they are even aware they are sick. Other diseases can be spread by blood and body fluids. A person may have some germs for several years without knowing it. Examples are Hepatitis C and HIV. Protect yourself by not sharing any personal items (e.g. nail clippers/fingernail files, shavers, and toothbrushes). Just because you cannot see any blood on an item does not mean a very small drop is not there. It is good to get tested for these diseases and know your status. Please contact your health center for more information about testing.

### Resource

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. (Sept. 2009). Understanding Microbes in Sickness and in Health. Retrieved August 09, 2016, from <http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/gpo14249/microbesbook.pdf>

## 2.6. Germs from your household pet could make you sick

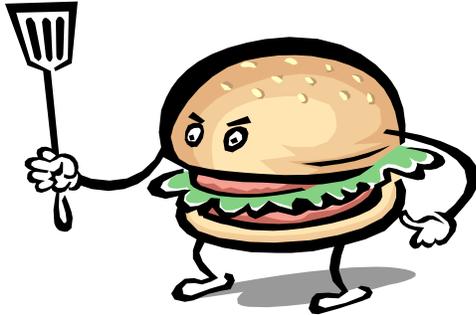


You can catch a variety of germs from animals, especially pets. Dog and cat saliva (spit) contain up to 100 different germs that can make you sick. Ensure that animal owner is around if you want to approach/pet an unfamiliar animal. Anytime you are bitten or scratched by any animal, wash the area well with soap and water. Confine the animal, but DO NOT destroy it and discuss the situation with your health care provider. Always wash hands after coming in contact with an animal of any kind.

### Resource

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. (Sept. 2009). Understanding Microbes in Sickness and in Health. Retrieved August 09, 2016, from <http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/gpo14249/microbesbook.pdf>

## 2.7. Contaminated food and water can make you sick



Every year, numerous people become ill worldwide from eating or drinking contaminated foods. Protect yourself and your family by washing any vegetables and fruits prior to eating them. Keep food stored according to the directions on its label. If you are unsure of the quality of the water, boil it. Discourage people from drinking directly out of lakes, streams and rivers as human and animal waste could have gotten into them.

At community gatherings ensure that food is safely prepared and stored. Food can quickly go bad without anybody being able to taste or see that there is a problem. If possible, have someone who has taken the Safe Food Handlers Course to help with the food. The Environmental Health Officer who covers your community can tell you about this course.

### Resource

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. (Sept. 2009). Understanding Microbes in Sickness and in Health. Retrieved August 09, 2016, from <http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/gpo14249/microbesbook.pdf>

### 3. PREVENTION

Germs are everywhere in our world and by being aware how they are passed on from one person to another we can decrease our chances of becoming ill. Remembering to do the following will help:

- Hand washing (helps in the prevention of enteric and respiratory diseases);
- Cough etiquette (helps to reduce the spread of respiratory diseases);
- Immunization (helps to prevent the spread of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases e.g. Pertussis, Hepatitis B, Influenza etc.);
- Storing and preparing food adequately (helps in the prevention of food poisoning);
- Not sharing needles or personal items (helps in the prevention of Hepatitis B&C and HIV/AIDS);
- Using soap and water to scrubbed small bits of mould growth around kitchen and bathroom water supplies (helps to prevent structural damage to the home and potential respiratory illnesses);
- Using insect repellents and wearing long pants, sleeves and stocks (helps in the prevention of disease transmitted through insect bites such as West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease);
- Using screens and well-fitting windows and doors (helps to prevent pest from entering the building);
- Practicing safe sex (reduces the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases such as Gonorrhoea, Chlamydia, Hepatitis B and HIV/AIDS);
- Avoid the exchange of saliva and respiratory tract secretions for example by avoiding sharing drinks and cigarettes. This reduces the spread of many germs, including those causing colds and other respiratory illnesses;
- Avoiding social gathering or close contact with others when you are ill prevents the spread of germ. Depending on the illness and risk to community members' social gatherings may be postponed or individuals may be asked by their healthcare providers to stay home until they are well or unable to spread illness;

- Know the risks and how to protect yourself when you travel within and outside of Canada. Recently, Zika virus and Ebola have reminded us of the importance of travelling wisely.

#### Resource

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. (Sept. 2009). Understanding Microbes in Sickness and in Health. Retrieved August 09, 2016, from <http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/gpo14249/microbesbook.pdf>

#### 4. WHAT IS INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL?



Infection prevention and control measures are important at every level of community life. They are applicable to individuals, their families and the community as a whole. They are not just for healthcare settings.

Infection Prevention and Control means what people do to avoid, minimize or stop the spread of germs. It includes the following activities:

**Hand washing:** Remembering to wash hands frequently whether we are at home, school, work, hunting and out at social gatherings.

**Cough Etiquette:** Remembering to cover your nose and mouth with your sleeves when you cough.

**Housekeeping:** Ensuring any living /camping or community space is cleaned routinely.

**Appropriately caring for Food:** Follow safe-food handling guidelines, whether at home or in a community setting.

**Safe needle usage:** Not sharing needles of any type (diabetic, lancet, tattoo etc.) and disposing of them in the right kind of container.

**Immunization:** Ensuring that immunization is up-to-date at all ages.

**Education Program:** Promoting ways individuals or groups can decrease the spread of disease (e.g. hand washing, cough etiquette, not sharing drinks or cigarettes, not sharing towels and personal items).

## 5. HAND WASHING



One of the most effective ways to decrease the spread of illness and keep our community healthy is by washing our hands regularly throughout the day. Because germs are often spread by our hands, having clean hands is the number one way to stop the spread of germs.

### How to wash your hands properly?

- Use liquid soap or a clean bar of soap. Wet your hands with warm, running water. Rub on soap. Lather well. Regular soap will do the job!
- Rub your hands together briskly for at least 15 seconds. If you do not have a watch, sing a short song to yourself (e.g. Happy Birthday or Twinkle Twinkle);
- Scrub all over, and pay attention to the backs of your hands, wrists, between your fingers, and under your fingernails;
- Rinse under running water and dry with a clean towel;
- If you are in a public restroom, use a paper towel to turn off the faucet after you finish so you won't have to touch the taps;
- Store liquid soaps in closed containers. Wash and dry the containers before you fill them. To prevent bacteria from getting in, do not top up partially empty containers.

## When to wash hands?



Wash your hands:

- Before, during, and after preparing food;
- Before eating food;
- Before and after providing care for any sick person;
- Before and after treating a cut or wound;
- After each visit to the bathroom;
- After sneezing, coughing or rubbing your nose or eyes;
- Before rubbing your eyes or putting in contact lenses, or flossing your teeth;
- At the start and end of your workday, no matter where you work;
- Upon entering and leaving a healthcare facility;
- After touching an animal, animal feed or animal waste;
- After touching or taking out the garbage;
- Upon entering your home.

Resource

Association of Professionals in Infection Control. (May 2016). Consumer Alert: Clean Your Hands Often! Retrieved August 9, 2016 from

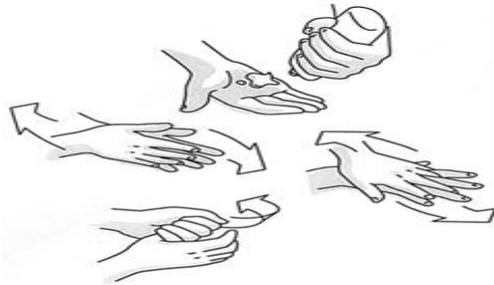
<http://www.apic.org/For-Consumers/Monthly-alerts-for-consumers>

## 6. HAND SANITIZERS



Hand sanitizers can be found in stores and are also called waterless hand soap. They are great to use when there is no adequate place to wash hands. They usually contain approximately 60 percent or greater of alcohol. When using hand sanitizers, it is crucial to follow the directions on the label as these may vary from one manufacturer to another.

### How to use hand sanitizers?



- Place about one teaspoon (size of one loonie) of sanitizer on the palm of one hand.
- Rub both hands
- Remember to do the backs, palms, sides of the hand and in between fingers, finger tips and thumb, rub until hands are dry. Do not wave them through the air.
- It takes about 30 seconds to use hand sanitizer. Your hands should stay wet for at least 15 -20 seconds. If the sanitizer dries in less time it means you need to use more hand sanitizer.

## **When to use hand sanitizers?**

Hand sanitizers is an alternative when running water is not available or hands are not visibly dirty (blood or any other body fluid).

**TIP:** Do not top up a bottle of hand sanitizer. Wash it out and dry it if bottle needs to be reused. Hand sanitizers are flammable and should be kept away from open fire.

## **Promoting hand washing**

Studies have shown that businesses and schools that promote hand washing have a decrease in illness and absenteeism throughout the year. Management at all band facilities needs to encourage and promote hand washing using the following tips:

- Have band buildings display hand washing signs that are clear and concise and use pictures rather than words as people are not willing to spend a lot of time reading a message;
- Place hand sanitizers at the entrances of health centers and other community facilities;
- Periodically change the color of the hand washing sign as people stop noticing it;
- Put signs in toilet stalls and at sinks;
- Assign to someone the task to check the hand washing sign;
- Ensure on a daily basis that bathrooms have the essential supplies;
- At least twice a year, review how each facility is promoting hand washing and providing the supplies to encourage hand washing;
- Place hand sanitizer in band vehicles for drivers and passengers to use;
- Be a role model for your community;
- Place hand sanitizers out at social gatherings such as band meetings, weddings, and funerals.

### Resource

Health Canada. (April 2010). It's Your Health: The Benefits of Hand Washing. Retrieved on August 9, 2016 from

<http://hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/diseases-maladies/hands-mains-eng.php>

## 7. Cough Etiquette

### Cough etiquette

Cough etiquette means what each person can do to stop the spread of respiratory illness.



- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue (or at least your sleeve) when coughing or sneezing. Respiratory illnesses spread from person to person by tiny droplets sprayed into the air when the infected person coughs or sneezes.
- Use tissues and dispose of them immediately in the nearest garbage can after use and then wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are spread when you touch something that has been in contact with them. They can live for several hours on surfaces like doorknobs, desk or chairs.
- Always wash your hands thoroughly and often.
- Avoid social gathering when you are ill and avoid close contact with persons who are sick.

Resources:

Centre for Disease Control: [http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/protect/cdc\\_cough.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/protect/cdc_cough.pdf)

Alberta Health: <http://www.health.alberta.ca/documents/Influenza-Poster-Cover-Cough.pdf>

## 8. Antibiotic Resistance

Resistance to antibiotic is a global public health problem. Bacteria, a specific type of germ, are learning ways to avoid the effectiveness of antibiotics. Infections or diseases caused by resistant bacteria can be very difficult to treat. The number of bacteria that are becoming resistance to antibiotics is growing. Sometimes these bacteria are called “superbugs”.

To prevent the problem of antibiotic resistance we need to use antibiotics wisely. Think of them as a natural resource. We must use them wisely so that they will be there when we really need them.

Antibiotics are not effective against viruses, another type of germ. Viruses cause a number of illnesses and diseases. The common cold and flu (influenza) are caused by viruses.

What you can do to help:

- Understand that antibiotics are not effective against viruses, and do not expect your healthcare provider to prescribe antibiotics if it is likely that your illness is caused by a virus.
- Take them only when you need them. Ask your healthcare provider if you really need antibiotics.
- Do not share your medication.
- Take them as prescribed.

### Resources

Northern Antibiotic Resistance Partnership. (2007). Antibiotic Resistance. Retrieved on Aug. 10, 2016 from <http://www.narp.ca/index.htm>

Public Health Agency of Canada. (2014). Antibiotic resistance questions and answers – For First Nations and Inuit. Retrieved on Aug. 9, 2016 from <http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/drugs-products-medicaments-produits/buying-using-achat-utilisation/antibiotic-resistance-antibiotique/material-materiel/index-eng.php>

## 9. HOUSEKEEPING AT HOME

Keeping our homes clean is an important part of infection control. When you are cleaning in your home remember to clean from high surfaces to low surfaces and from cleanest to dirtiest. One of the rooms that can cause the most problems in terms of passing on illness is the kitchen as it tends to be the room in the house that is used the most but cleaned the least.

### **Tips for cleaning the kitchen**

- Empty the trash daily, it helps to keep odors from forming and keeps insects and rodents away.
- Clean the inside and the outside of the garbage can with a disinfectant.
- Wipe surfaces down using a cloth with warm water and a detergent.
- Wipe tables, stovetops, and counters. Remember to wipe off any cabinet or fridge door that has been touched when preparing the food.
- Remove any grease or splashes caused by cooking food.
- Remember to rinse and clean the cloth frequently as it is being used.
- Use a bleach sanitizing solution to wipe off counter tops.

#### ***How to prepare a bleach sanitizer?***

- Mix 5 ml (1 teaspoon) of bleach with 750 ml (3 cups) of water. Place it in a labeled bottle.
- After cleaning, wet a clean cloth with the bleach sanitizer and wipe the surface.
- Allow it to air dry.

## Washing dishes



- Wash up dishes on a regular basis. Dishes that are left to soak make a great breeding ground for germs to grow and multiply.
- Start each day with a fresh cloth. Ensure it is rinsed well after use and hung up to dry.
- Allow dishes to air dry before putting them away.
- Wash hands prior to putting dishes away.

## Cleaning floors



- Keep a sponge or cloth just for the floor.
- Mops need to be rinsed out after use and the mop heads should be allowed to dry.
- Wipe spills up as soon as they occur to ensure pests don't have a source of food.
- Sweep floors daily using a dust mop or broom.

## Resource

Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Technology, Woodland Campus. (January 2006). *Clinic Cleaners Handbook*, SIAST Woodland Campus p148

## Cleaning bathrooms



Cleaning the bathroom regularly helps keep it neat and odor free. How often it needs to be done may vary depending on family size and ages of kids.

- Wipe all surfaces including the sink, counter top, toilet and towel rack.
- Keep cleaning cloths used to clean the bathroom separate from cloths used to clean other areas of the house.
- Use an all-purpose cleaner and warm water.
- Use a toilet brush or a separate cleaning cloth for the toilet.
- Wear rubber gloves to protect the hands if using harsh chemicals.
- Empty the garbage. Wipe the inside and the outside of the garbage can.
- Air the bathroom out by opening a window.
- Wipe mirrors.
- Scrub the floor.

## Cleaning Products

Whatever the product used, it is very important to ensure that the instructions on the label are followed. Some products such as Lysol are not recommended for food surfaces. Mix the product as directed. Some products cannot be mixed with other things. Each product may be a little different.

### Resource

Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Technology, Woodland Campus. (January 2006). *Clinic Cleaners Handbook*, SIAST Woodland Campus p148

## 10. HOUSEKEEPING IN COMMUNITY SETTINGS

Good housekeeping is the cornerstone of infection prevention in community settings. The general cleanliness and hygiene of any facility are vital to the wellbeing and safety of all community members. It is also a sign that the community is concerned about keeping their members healthy. Sometimes we assume cleaning is common sense and do not train individuals responsible for cleaning well. Research shows us that with proper training cleanliness improves and the environment is less likely to play a role in the spread of germs. Health Canada has created an Environmental Cleaning Training Guide to help. Contact your environmental health office if you want more information about this guide.

Each band building needs to have its own list of duties the janitor must follow. For an example, see Table 1. This will vary depending on the size of the building and how often it is used by the community. Janitors or housekeeping staff should have on the job training and the necessary equipment for their particular building.

**Table 1: Example of broad cleaning schedule for office setting**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
Clean areas that people touch frequently (e.g. phones, keyboards, doorknobs)	Wipe daily if possible.
Clean chairs, lamps, tabletops and counters.	Wipe with detergent and a water-dampened cloth each week or more often depending on office.
Empty waste containers. Clean waste containers.	As often as required. Wipe the outside at least once a week. Clean the inside with water and detergent at least monthly.
Clean sinks.	Minimum of once a week or more often if needed.
Clean floors.	Clean using a mop dampened with detergent and water at least once a week. (Or more often if necessary).

Source: Engender Health: Improving Women's Health Worldwide. (2001). Housekeeping and Waste Disposal. *Infection Prevention: A Reference Booklet for Health Care Providers*, 56. Retrieved from <https://www.engenderhealth.org/files/pubs/qi/ip/ip-ref-eng.pdf>

## **11. INFECTION CONTROL AT DAYCARE CENTRES AND SCHOOLS**

The purpose of maintaining a clean environment in daycare centers and schools is to help decrease the spread of illness among kids and staff. Daily prevention measures include promoting and encouraging hand washing for kids and staff:

- After changing diapers;
- When hands are dirty;
- Before eating and or handling food;
- After going to the bathroom;
- At the start and end of each workday.

### **Supplies**

Healthy buildings are dependent on the availability of adequate cleaning supplies that enable housekeeping staff to keep the buildings clean. Daily activities for supplies should include:

- Ensuring bathrooms and sink areas are stocked daily with toilet paper, paper towels and soap;
- Ensuring the availability of hot and cold water;
- Disinfectant wipes near change tables and other surfaces that need to be cleaned between uses;
- Hand sanitizers are available and dispensers are clean;
- Tissues and garbage cans are available to support cough etiquette.

### **Daily cleaning activities**

- Start the day with supplies that are clean (e.g. bucket, mop, cloths).
- Mix the cleaning product as described on the side of the bottle for the task at hand. Some products may suggest as many as three or more ways of mixing

depending on whether it is for general cleaning or disinfecting. Some products may be harmful if used on food surfaces or on toys. **READ THE LABEL!!!**

- Bathrooms are to be cleaned at least daily by the housekeeping staff using separate cloths for the sink and toilet.
- Wipe down surfaces, toys and shared items. Focus on the areas that kids and staff may touch on a daily basis. These include doors, doorknobs, windows, phones, and keyboards.

### **Signage**

- Place signs that promote hand washing throughout the building.
- Place in classrooms signs that encourage individuals to cover their noses and mouths when coughing or sneezing.

Promoting and encouraging a clean healthy environment is everyone's responsibility. It all starts with adults being role models to their children.

### Resource

Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Technology, Woodland Campus. (January 2006). *Clinic Cleaners Handbook*, SIAST Woodland Campus p148

## 12. KITCHEN FOOD SAFETY AT HOME AND AT COMMUNITY GATHERINGS



The majority of food borne illnesses results from poor food handling. The kitchen you are cooking in could be a high risk environment for passing on illnesses to your family or community as germs can thrive in food that is improperly stored or handled. The following tips can help reduce the frequency of food borne illnesses:

- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water;
- Wash again when switching from one food to another;
- For community cooking, it is better to have soap dispensed from a pump dispenser and to use paper towels to dry hands;
- Sanitize your work area with a bleach sanitizer prior to and after food preparation as this reduces germs and can prevent food borne illnesses;
- Clean everything hands come in contact with. Examples would include kitchen cloths, faucet handles, can opener blades, refrigerator handles and small appliances.

### **Safety tips for the kitchen (at home, work, school, etc.)**

- Keep pest out of the kitchen by keeping window screened and doors in good repair
- Keep separate cutting boards for raw meat, poultry and seafood and a different one for ready-to-eat and cooked foods. Clean and sanitize cutting boards after each use. Plastic cutting boards can be easily cleaned in the dishwasher.

- Wash the lids of canned foods just before opening them to prevent dirt from getting into the food. Clean the can opener's blade after every use.
- Take small appliances (food processors, meat grinders and blenders) apart right after you use them, and clean and sanitize them thoroughly.
- Air dry dishes and utensils if you can, or dry them with clean kitchen towels. Wash and sanitize towels, sponges and cloths often to prevent germs from growing.
- Clean the pantry regularly, keeping food off the floor. Store food in sealed containers.
- Thoroughly wash and sanitize containers and utensils that were in contact with raw food before you reuse them.
- If you have an infection or a cut on your hand, cover it with a bandage and then wear disposable gloves when preparing food but remember that gloves pick up germs too so change gloves frequently.

#### Resource

Food Safety for First Nations. (Sept. 2013). Retrieved on August 9, 2016 from:

<http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/eating-nutrition/healthy-eating-saine-alimentation/safety-salubrite/vulnerable-populations/first-premieres-nations-eng.php#hunting>

Canadian Food Inspection Agency. (July 2013). Food Handling. Retrieved August 8, 2016, from

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/information-for-consumers/fact-sheets-and-infographics/food-handling/eng/1331871496701/1331871695247>

## Fridge and freezer

Refrigeration slows down the growth of most germs while freezing can stop most germs from growing. (But remember: chilling won't kill germs. Only proper cooking will do that). The following are useful tips for fridges and freezers:

- Don't let bacteria get a foothold! After you shop, immediately put away food that needs to be refrigerated or frozen;
- Check the temperature of your fridge and freezer. **Are they cold enough?**
- Set refrigerators at or below 4°C (40°F). Use a refrigerator thermometer to check the temperature;
- Keep freezers at or below -18°C (0°F). Use a freezer thermometer to check the temperature;
- Don't overload your fridge and freezer. Cool air must circulate freely to keep food properly chilled;
- Clean the refrigerator and freezer regularly;
- Germs can be carried in raw meat juices. Place raw meat, poultry and seafood in containers on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator;
- Clean spills quickly to prevent contamination and pests.

### Resource

Food Safety for First Nations. (Sept. 2013). Retrieved on August 9, 2016 from <http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/eating-nutrition/healthy-eating-saine-alimentation/safety-salubrite/vulnerable-populations/first-premieres-nations-eng.php#hunting>

Canadian Food Inspection Agency. (July 2013). Food Handling. Retrieved August 8, 2016, from <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/information-for-consumers/fact-sheets-and-infographics/food-handling/eng/1331871496701/1331871695247>

### **13. FOOD SAFETY FOR CAMPING AND PICNICKING**

Even when having fun in the outdoors, it is important that individuals and their families continue to use safe food handling practices. The following are some suggestions to be able to do that:

- Wash your hands with warm water and soap before preparing food or eating. If soap and warm water are not available, use a hand sanitizer or disposable wipes;
- Bring some good hand soap and a fingernail brush so you and your helpers can wash your hands at the local faucet (or bring a water carrier with a spout). Dry your hands with paper towels;
- After touching raw meat, seafood or produce (or after going to the bathroom, handling a pet, or changing a diaper), wash your hands with warm water and soap.

#### **What to pack?**

- Paper towels
- Disposable wipes
- Clean plastic bags to store food
- Pre frozen ice packs
- A big trash bag for dirty paper towels and food scraps.

#### **Wash food**

- Always wash fruits and vegetables. You cannot tell by look, smell or taste if the food is clean or not.
- Always keep cooked and uncooked foods separate from each other as raw food can contaminate cooked food. Use a separate cutting board for raw poultry, raw meat and other foods.

## **Chill: Keep cold food cold**

- Foods that are normally kept in the refrigerators, such as luncheon meats, cooked meat, chicken, potato or pasta salads, must be kept in a cooler with a freezer pack.
- Refrigerate or freeze food the day before you pack it for a trip.
- When packing a cooler, put any meat or poultry on the bottom, and pack food in reverse order, so that the foods packed on top are the ones you expect to use first.
- Keep the cooler in the coolest part of the car or the boat and place it in shade or a shelter, away from direct sunlight. Keep the cooler closed as much as possible.
- Put leftovers away as soon as you are finished eating.
- Discard all perishable foods once the ice or freezer packs in your cooler have melted.
- When in doubt throw the food out.

## Resource

Food Safety for First Nations. (Sept. 2013). Retrieved on August 9, 2016 from <http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/eating-nutrition/healthy-eating-saine-alimentation/safety-salubrite/vulnerable-populations/first-premieres-nations-eng.php#hunting>

Canadian Food Inspection Agency, (July 2013). Food Handling. Retrieved August 8, 2016, from <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/information-for-consumers/fact-sheets-and-infographics/food-handling/eng/1331871496701/1331871695247>

## 14. INFECTION CONTROL TIPS FOR HUNTERS AND FISHERMEN



- Do not harvest or handle any wild game or fish that is obviously sick or already dead.
- Wear rubber gloves and washable clothing while cleaning game or fish.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke while cleaning game or fish.
- Wash hands with soap and water or alcohol wipes immediately after handling any game or fish.
- Wash tools and work surfaces used to clean the game, birds or fish with soap and water, then disinfect the area with a solution of 5ml of bleach diluted in 750 ml of clean water.
- Place uncooked fish or game in plastic bag or container for transport.
- Separate raw meat, fish, and birds from cooked or ready to eat foods to avoid contamination.

### Resource

Health Canada. (Sept. 2013). Food Safety for First Nations. Retrieved on August 9, 2016 from <http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/eating-nutrition/healthy-eating-saine-alimentation/safety-salubrite/vulnerable-populations/first-premieres-nations-eng.php#hunting>

## **15. LARGE SOCIAL GATHERINGS**

During times of celebration in communities, it is important for the organizers and participants to keep in mind that it is everyone's responsibility to try and maintain basic infection control measures. The most common way people can become ill at these events is from the participants eating food that has not been stored or handled properly. The second way is by people not hand washing or practicing cough etiquette.

### **Checklist for organizers of large social gatherings**

Prior to the start of any community event some simple things can be done to help decrease the potential of any illness being spread. Follow the list below and add to it to suit your community event.

#### **Tasks to do prior to the event**

- Kitchen cleanliness: Ensure that fridges, freezers, stoves, countertops and cooking supplies are clean. Also, sanitized all surfaces and utensils.
- Kitchen supplies: Ensure that you have enough dish soap, hand soap, bleach, paper towels, napkins, and dishcloths to handle all of the washing and drying that may be necessary.
- Garbage cans: Clean inside and outside. Have extra garbage bags.
- Bathrooms: Ensure that you have enough supplies such as toilet paper, paper towels and soap dispensers.
- Outdoors events: Remember that portable toilets need to be clean and have supplies!
- Ensure that you have the right equipment to keep food hot and cold.
- Have enough volunteers to be responsible for specific areas such as bathrooms and the kitchen before, during and after the event. Have on hand volunteers who have taken the Safe Food Handling Course.
- Concession stands: Have separate staff for taking money and others to do food preparation.

- Ensure water is on hand in concession setting for hand washing. Other options could include hand wipes or waterless hand soap.
- Post up in kitchens and bathrooms signs on promoting hand washing and cough etiquette.
- Make arrangements for disposal of large volumes of used cooking oil at a restaurant with a service for removal after the event or put cooled oil in sealed containers and take to the waste disposal grounds and place in the designated area.
- Check with your Environmental Health Officer to see what else may need to be done.

### **Food line suggestions**

- Encourage hand washing by having hand sanitizers at the beginning of the line.
- Have an elder promote hand washing prior to the start of the event.
- Utilize disposable dishes and utensils if possible.
- Have enough food tongs or serving utensils out so people will not have to touch food with hands.
- Keep cold food cold and hot food hot.

## 16. ILLNESSES IN THE COMMUNITY

There may be times when a community experiences a great deal of illness. Staying home when you are ill is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of infections. However, families and friends still want to join in events and support each other. The following are some ideas individuals can follow to decrease their chances of spreading infection at a social gathering:

- Wash hands upon joining and leaving a gathering and when you get home;
- During the flu season or any other kind of outbreak keep an arm's length away from others. This will decrease the spread of illnesses;
- Keep hands away from face. Try to not touch the nose, mouth or eyes;
- Do not share snuff, smokes, food or drinks with others;
- Do not share make-up with others.

Besides avoiding social gatherings, keeping to yourself in your home to prevent the spread of infections to family members is important to consider. During the H1N1 pandemic, families successfully prevented the spread between family members by supporting the ill family member to keep to themselves.

Illnesses and outbreaks of infectious disease can occur anywhere. Be sure to travel wisely. Plan ahead and consult with your healthcare provider before travelling outside the country to understand the risks and what you can do to protect yourself. Vaccinations, taking preventive medication, safer sex and avoiding mosquito bites may be required depending on your travel plans.

### Resources

DigiPix Media & Dakota Ojibway Health Services. (2010). Pandemic Influenza: Experiences of First Nations in Manitoba. [DVD]

Public Health Agency of Canada. (2014). Well On Your Way: A Canadian's Guide to Healthy Travel Aboard. Retrieved on August 10, 2016 from <https://travel.gc.ca/>

## 17. WAKES

During wakes people are sometimes concerned that the body may spread disease. The deceased person does not pass on any illness as long as there are no body fluids present. What can cause illnesses to spread comes from the people who are touching and kissing the body. Whilst kissing or talking over the body, tiny spit droplets will be left behind. The next person to touch the body may come in contact with this tiny amount of spit from the last person in contact with the body. Suggestions to decrease this risk could include:

- Hand washing before and after touching the body;
- Cleaning the area of the body prior to touching or using a tissue to form a barrier between you and the body of the deceased.

In special situations, the Medical Health Officer for your community will let families, health care professionals and your community leaders know if people are required to do other things during wakes to prevent the spread of illness.

### Resource

World Health Organization, (May 10, 2007). Avian Influenza, Including Influenza A (H5N1), in Humans: WHO Interim Infection Control Guideline for Health Care Facilities. Retrieved December 22, 2016 from [http://www.wpro.who.int/emerging\\_diseases/documents/docs/AI\\_Inf\\_Control\\_Guide\\_10May2007.pdf](http://www.wpro.who.int/emerging_diseases/documents/docs/AI_Inf_Control_Guide_10May2007.pdf)

### **QUICK REVIEW**

Remember, respiratory illnesses are passed on by droplets from the mouth, nose and eyes. Every time someone speaks, coughs or sneezes, a little droplet can go into the air. These illnesses can also be spread indirectly through contaminated hands and objects.

A person can be passing on a cold or flu a few days before they know they are sick.

Final tip: Washing hands is the best way to prevent the spread of illness!!

## WEB POSTERS

### Hand Washing Posters:

Northern Antibiotic Resistance Partnership posters for children:

<http://www.narp.ca/edu.htm>

World Health Organization How to Wash Your Hands Poster:

[http://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/How\\_To\\_HandWash\\_Poster.pdf](http://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/How_To_HandWash_Poster.pdf)

World Health Organization How to Handrub:

[http://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/How\\_To\\_HandRub\\_Poster.pdf](http://www.who.int/gpsc/5may/How_To_HandRub_Poster.pdf)

### Cover Your Cough:

Centre for Disease Control:

[http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/protect/cdc\\_cough.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/protect/cdc_cough.pdf)

Alberta Health: <http://www.health.alberta.ca/documents/Influenza-Poster-Cover-Cough.pdf>

### Antibiotic Awareness

Public Health Agency of Canada poster and brochure for

Frist Nations and Inuit: <http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/drugs-products-medicaments-produits/buying-using-achat-utilisation/antibiotic-resistance-antibiotique/material-materiel/index-eng.php>

Association for Professionals in Infection Control poster ABCs of Antibiotics:

<http://professionals.site.apic.org/infographic/>

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- Health Canada. (April 2010). It's Your Health: The Benefits of Hand Washing. Retrieved on August 9, 2016 from <http://hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/diseases-maladies/hands-mains-eng.php>
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- Public Health Agency of Canada. (2014). Antibiotic resistance questions and answers - For First Nations and Inuit. Retrieved on Aug. 9, 2016 from <http://healthy Canadians.gc.ca/drugs-products-medicaments-produits/buying-using-achat-utilisation/antibiotic-resistance-antibiotique/material-materiel/index-eng.php>
- Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Technology, Woodland Campus. (January 2006). *Clinic Cleaners Handbook*, SIAST Woodland Campus p148
- World Health Organization, (May 10, 2007). Avian Influenza, Including Influenza A (H5N1), in Humans: WHO Interim Infection Control Guideline for Health Care Facilities. Retrieved December 22, 2016 from [http://www.wpro.who.int/emerging\\_diseases/documents/docs/AI\\_Inf\\_Control\\_Guide\\_10May2007.pdf](http://www.wpro.who.int/emerging_diseases/documents/docs/AI_Inf_Control_Guide_10May2007.pdf)