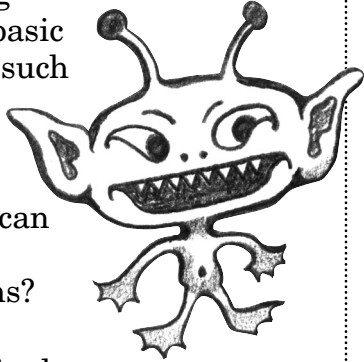


# Caregiver Assistance News

"CARING FOR YOU ... CARING FOR OTHERS"

## Hygiene...Keeping It Clean!

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there is an increase in infectious diseases and a growing resistance to antibiotics. Therefore, effective cleaning techniques and basic health practices such as frequent hand washing are especially important. How can a busy caregiver prevent infections?



Simple hand washing is the single most effective way to prevent spreading germs.

### Defending Against Needless Infection

To minimize the chance of infection, always wash your hands:

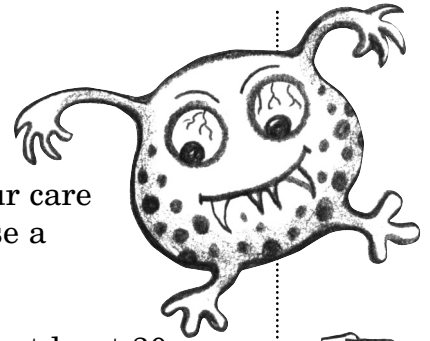
- Before and after contact with the person in your care and with other people.
- When returning from a trip outside the house.
- After using the toilet.
- Before preparing medications, doing a procedure or preparing food.



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

### Hand Washing the Right Way

1. If the person in your care has an infection, use a bottle-dispensed antimicrobial soap.
2. Rub your hands for at least 30 seconds to produce lots of lather. Do this away from running water so the lather is not washed away.
3. Use a nail brush on your nails; keep your nails trimmed and free of chips.
4. Wash the front and back of hands, between fingers and at least two inches up your wrists.
5. Rinse well under warm running water. Repeat the process.
6. Dry your hands on a clean cloth or paper towel.



### Soiled Laundry Handling

As a caregiver you are around a lot of soiled laundry. So make it safe:

- Always use latex gloves when handling soiled laundry.
- Carry dirty linens away from your body.
- 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.



Article continues  
on page 2

**Continued from page 1 Hygiene...Keeping it Clean!**

- Wash soiled linen separately from other clothes.
- Fill the machine with hot water, add 1/4 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.



*Remember, wash your hands before going on to another task!*

**Sterilization**

If several people are sharing supplies or equipment, sterilization will cut down on the spread of germs. If only one person is using the equipment, keeping it clean and simply wiping it with a cotton ball soaked in a disinfectant is adequate.

**Prevention of Odors**

Germs need moisture, warm temperatures, oxygen, darkness, and nourishment to grow. When the germs are happy, the result can be rooms unpleasant to be in.

To eliminate some strong odors try:

- Keeping all storage areas dry and disinfected.
- Leaving a partially full can of finely ground coffee open under the bed.
- Pouring a few drops of mouthwash in commodes and bedpans.
- Placing mouthwash-saturated cotton balls in the room.



- Spraying a fine mist of a solution of white distilled vinegar mixed with a few drops of eucalyptus or peppermint essential oil.
- Saturating cotton balls with vanilla extract and placing them in containers that retain strong odors.
- If all else fails, use electrical and mechanical devices for removing odor.

**If Using a Wheelchair:**

- Wear leather gloves.
- Wash your hands frequently. Between washings use pre-packaged cleansing towelettes.
- Keep the wheelchair clean and free from grime buildup.



**Note** Once a sterile package is opened to the air, it is no longer considered sterile. Never use the microwave oven to heat a non-food item. It may catch fire or explode.



Got time for a cold, but not a 30-second hand wash!

## Taking Care of Yourself

It is very important to take care of yourself in order to be able to take care of others. Eating well is one way to do this—no matter how many demands you have on your time. Eating properly means...

- ✂ Drinking plenty of water
- ✂ Eating several servings of fruits, vegetables and beans every day
- ✂ Choosing whole grains
- ✂ Getting plenty of calcium from dark leafy greens, fish with bones (sardines and salmon), soy products and calcium fortified orange juice
- ✂ Going easy on salt and salty foods
- ✂ Limiting sugary processed foods that have low nutritional value and cause cravings for more.
- ✂ Taking your vitamins.

**Pay attention to portion size.** To visualize the proper serving size—1/2 cup is about the size of a tennis ball and 3 ounces of meat is the size of a deck of cards. Misjudging as little as 100 calories per day can result in a 10-pound weight gain over the course of a year.

## Food Safety

We can get food-borne illnesses in the kitchen from germs on cutting boards, sponges and counter tops.

### Careful Food Preparation

Older people and those who may feel "run down," such as caregivers, are especially susceptible to illness from unsafe food. Be careful when storing, preparing, and cooking meals.

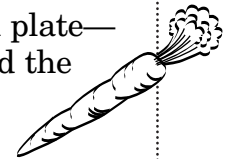
- ★ Wash your hands (and the person's in your care) with antibacterial soap before preparing or serving food. Dry hands with a fresh paper towel or a clean cloth towel that has been washed in the hot cycle of the washing machine.
- ★ Always wash cutting boards and utensils with hot soapy water after they come in contact with raw meat, poultry and seafood.
- ★ Disinfect the sink and kitchen counters, with a solution of one teaspoon chlorine bleach per quart of water. Mix a new solution each week to assure its effectiveness.



### Feeling Good About Yourself

In addition to eating properly, nurture your muscles and bones. Sneak exercise into your day with little tricks like taking the stairs instead of the elevator.

- ★ 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.



RECIPIENT'S NAME  
RECIPIENT'S ADDRESS  
CITY, STATE ZIP

PLACE  
POSTAGE  
HERE

YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME  
YOUR ORGANIZATION'S ADDRESS  
CITY, STATE ZIP

### Our Purpose

To provide caregivers with critical information enabling them to do their job with confidence, pride and competence.

### Ordering Info

Caregiver Assistance Newsletter  
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From the publishers of

*The Comfort of Home*

*Guide for Caregivers*

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CareTrust Publications LLC  
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or [www.comfortofhome.com](http://www.comfortofhome.com)

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## Caregiver Education

### "Powerful Tools for Caregiving"

a six week educational program for family caregivers, teaches skills to increase caregiver confidence and self-care behaviors.

Call for information about classes in your community.

### "Caring That Makes a Difference"

A two day, 16 hour class, is offered bimonthly for those interested in learning about the aging process and chronic illness. The class provides continuing adult foster care credit.

### Coping In New Territory

Workshop by Jane Jones, local business-woman and author, for those dealing with the challenges of caring for

aging parents. Learn to clarify roles and responsibilities, and discover practical, loving solutions to tough problems.

**CPR-Adult** Learn to recognize the signals of a heart attack, care for an adult who stops breathing or is

smoking, and administer CPR.

Provides one year American Red Cross certification.

**Call 415-565-6578 for schedule, to register and for information about classes in your community.**

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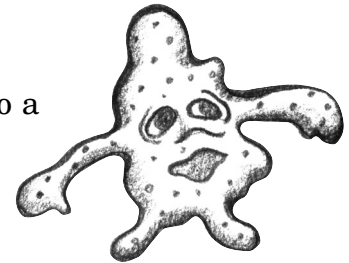
“ C A R I N G F O R Y O U . . . C A R I N G F O R O T H E R S ”

## Q U I C K Q U I Z

After reading this issue, think about how in providing care and assistance you can prevent infections by using some of the suggestions learned. Answering the true or false questions below will help you in this thinking and learning process.



1. The single best thing you can do to reduce the spread of infections is to wash food carefully.  
T F
2. Carry tightly to your body all soiled linen and take directly to a washing machine.  
T F
3. Keep the refrigerator temperature at no warmer than 40° F.  
T F
4. Washing your hands for at least 5 minutes is necessary to get them clean.  
T F
5. The kitchen cutting board can be a source of germs to spread infections.  
T F
6. Placing cotton balls soaked in mouthwash in containers around a room can reduce odors.  
T F
7. An antimicrobial soap can cut down on the chance of infection.  
T F
8. Only 100 extra calories a week can result in a 10-pound weight gain over a year.  
T F
9. Store red meat in the refrigerator on the top shelf with other foods.  
T F
10. Carefully opening and closing a package can preserve its sterility for another use.  
T F



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Answers: 1. F, 2. F, 3. T, 4. F, 5. T, 6. T, 7. T, 8. T, 9. F, 10. F