

Communicable Disease Notes

When a Communicable Disease is Suspected

- Separate the ill child from well children at the facility until the ill child can be taken home.
- Inform parents immediately so that medical advice can be sought.

- Adhere to the exclusion and readmission requirements provided on this chart.
- Observe the appearance and behavior of exposed children and be alert to the onset of disease.
- Pregnant women should avoid contact with individuals suspected of having chickenpox, cytomegalovirus, fifth disease, influenza, measles and rubella. Seek medical advice if exposure occurs.
- In addition to the conditions described in this chart, the following symptoms might indicate an infectious condition; consider excluding or isolating the child:
 - Irritability
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Crying that doesn't stop with the usual comforting
 - Extreme sleepiness
 - Vomiting two or more times in 24 hours
 - Mouth sores

*Minimizing the Spread of Communicable Disease

Handwashing (<http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/>)

- Encourage children and adults to wash their hands frequently, especially before handling or preparing foods and after wiping noses, diapering, using toilets, or handling animals.
- Wash hands with soap and water long enough to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice.
- Sinks, soap, and disposable towels should be easy for children to use.
- If soap and water are not available, clean hands with gels or wipes with alcohol in them.

Diapering

- Keep handwashing areas near diapering areas.
- Keep diapering and food preparation areas physically separate. Keep both surface areas clean, uncluttered, and dry.
- The same staff member should not change diapers and prepare food.
- Cover diapering surfaces with intact (no cracked or torn) plastic pads.
- If the diapering surface cannot be easily cleaned after each use, use a disposable material such as paper on the changing area and discard the paper after each diaper change.
- Sanitize the diapering surface after each use and at the end of the day.
- Wash hands with soap and water or clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner after diapering.

Environmental surfaces and personal items

- Regularly clean and sanitize all food service utensils, toys, and other items used by children.
- Discourage the use of stuffed toys or other toys that cannot be easily sanitized.
- Discourage children and adults from sharing items such as combs, brushes, jackets, and hats.
- Maintain a separate container to store clothing and other personal items.
- Keep changes of clothing on hand and store soiled items in a non-absorbent container that can be sanitized or discarded after use.
- Provide a separate sleeping area and bedding for each child, and wash bedding frequently.

Respiratory Hygiene and Cough Etiquette (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm>)

- Provide facial tissue throughout the facility. ([link to cough etiquette](#))
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- If tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into upper sleeve, not hands.
- Put used tissue in the waste basket.
- Wash hands with soap and water or clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner after coughing or sneezing.

Standard Precautions

*Because we do not always know if a person has an infectious disease, apply standard precautions to **every person every time** to assure that transmission of disease does not occur.*

- Wear gloves for touching blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, and contaminated items and for touching mucous membranes and nonintact skin.
- Use appropriate handwashing procedures after touching blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, contaminated items, and immediately after removing gloves.
- Develop procedures for routine care, cleaning, and disinfection of environmental surfaces.

Immunizations

Child-care facilities and schools are required to have an immunization record on file for each child enrolled to ensure that each child has received age-appropriate immunizations. For immunization information, contact your local health department or call (800) 252-9152, or visit <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school/>.

Antibiotic Use

Antibiotics are not effective against viral infections. Because common colds and many coughs, runny noses, and sore throats are caused by viruses, not bacteria, they should not be treated with antibiotics. Even bacterial illnesses might not require antibiotic treatment. Except for conditions indicated in the readmission criteria, do not require proof of antibiotic treatment for readmission to school or day care. Unnecessary or inappropriate antibiotic use can lead to the development of drug-resistant bacteria.

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