

Infection



“I am extra careful to stay away from germs that could make me sick. I wash my hands well, with soap and water, before meals.”

- **Check with your doctor or nurse before you take any medicine. This includes aspirin, acetaminophen (such as Tylenol®), or ibuprofen (such as Advil®).**
- **Check with your doctor or nurse before you get any shot or vaccine.**

Call right away if you have:

- Fever that is 100.5° F (38° C) or higher. Ask how many times a day you should take your temperature.
- Chills
- Cough or sore throat
- Ear pain
- Headache or bad sinus pain
- Stiff or sore neck
- Skin rash
- Sores or white coating in your mouth or on your tongue
- Swelling or redness anywhere. Watch for swelling or soreness if you have a catheter.
- Bloody or cloudy urine
- Pain or burning when you urinate
- Other:

 (Ask your nurse about other signs of infection to call about.)

Do you have any other changes or signs that don't seem normal to you? Don't wait. Call your doctor or nurse right away.



Take these steps to lower your chances of getting an infection:

Wash your hands well.

- Always wash your hands:
 - Before you cook or eat
 - After you use the bathroom
 - After being in a public place
- Wash your hands well with soap and water. Have people around you wash their hands well, too.
- Check with your doctor or nurse about when to use hand sanitizer.

Stay extra clean.

- Brush your teeth after meals and before you go to bed. Use a very soft toothbrush.
- If you have a catheter, keep the area around it clean and dry. Learn from your nurse how to take care of this area.

Try to stay away from germs.

- Stay away from people who are sick or have a cold. Try to stay away from big crowds if you can.
- Wash raw fruits and vegetables very well.
- Wash your hands carefully after you handle raw meat. Cook meat well before eating it.
- Try to stay away from people who have just had a chicken pox, polio, or measles vaccine.
- Have someone else clean up after your pet.

Try not to get cuts.

- Use an electric shaver, not a razor.
- Clean yourself well and gently after going to the bathroom. Let your nurse know if your rectal area is sore or bleeds.
- **Don't** squeeze pimples.

Questions to ask your doctor or nurse:

1. What problems should I call you about?
2. What other steps can I take to prevent an infection?
3. How and when should I take my temperature?
4. What problems should I go to the emergency room for?

Write the number to call in an emergency here:



How can we help?

National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service

Phone: 1-800-422-6237 (1-800-4-CANCER)

Web: www.cancer.gov

Online Chat: www.cancer.gov/livehelp

NCI has a series of 18 Chemotherapy Side Effects Sheets at:

www.cancer.gov/chemo-side-effects

