

INFECTION CONTROL GUIDELINES

Water Tower Nursing and Home Care, Inc. (WTN), in accordance with the recommendations for Universal Precautions published by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has developed the following guidelines to prevent the transmission of infection when working with all home care clients.

1. To be effective, infection control methods must be applied at all times, not just when persons are known to be infected. Therefore, consider that all blood and body fluids from all individuals are potentially infectious pathogens.
2. Hands must be washed before and after contact with a client and before and after preparing food. Hands should be washed with soap under a steady stream of warm water for at least twenty (20) seconds. Dry hands thoroughly.
3. Gloves must be worn as protective equipment when coming into contact with blood or body fluids. Hands must be washed immediately or as soon as feasible after the removal of gloves, whether or not the gloves are visibly contaminated. Gloves do not take the place of hand washing. Remove gloves by grasping the top along the wrist and peeling them off, folding the fingers into the glove and turning the glove inside out. Discard the gloves. Never reuse gloves.
4. Bed linens, towels, and clothing soiled with urine, stool, blood or any other body fluids should be placed in a plastic bag and tied shut until ready to be laundered. Contaminated laundry should be handled as little as possible with a minimum amount of agitation. Wear gloves as protective equipment when handling. Wash all soiled items in soapy and the hottest water possible (follow manufacturer instructions). Dry on the highest heat possible (follow manufacturer instructions).
5. Dispose of urine, stool, and vomit by flushing down the toilet.
6. Wearing gloves as protective equipment empty the bedpan or commode bucket into the toilet or use other suitable means of disposal. Rinse with a 1:10 bleach solution (Mix 1/4 cup household bleach to 2-1/4 cups of water). Wash out the inside of the bedpan or commode bucket with warm and soapy water. Make sure to dislodge any solid waste that may be present. Rinse in a very dilute bleach solution (1:100) or with an antibacterial cleaning agent.
7. Dispose of gloves and incontinent padding in a sealed plastic bag. Place the sealed bag inside the household trash bag.
8. Wash all eating utensils in hot and soapy water.
9. Upper respiratory infections
Upper respiratory tract infections can happen at any time. The vast majority of upper respiratory infections are caused by viruses and are self-limited. Symptoms of upper respiratory infection include: cough, sneezing, nasal discharge, nasal congestion, runny nose, fever, scratchy or sore throat, and nasal breathing.
Antibiotics are rarely needed to treat upper respiratory infections and generally should be avoided, unless the doctor suspects a bacterial infection.
Simple techniques, such as, proper hand washing and covering face while coughing or sneezing, as well as not touching your face may reduce the spread of respiratory tract infections. General outlook for upper respiratory infections is favorable, although, sometimes complication can occur.
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends getting medical attention immediately if you develop emergency warning signs.
Emergency warning signs include*:

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Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath

Persistent pain or pressure in the chest

New confusion or inability to arouse

Bluish lips or face

*This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

If you have any questions, or to request protective equipment, please contact a WTN Supervisor at (312) 280-4980.

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