

How to prevent the spread of Infection

This leaflet provides advice for everybody on the simple steps we can all take to reduce the spread of infection.



Causes of Infection

Infections can be passed from person to person in the following ways:

Hands

Hands are the most common way of spreading germs. Your hands can carry germs from one person to another.

Washing your hands

Washing your hands with soap and running water and drying them thoroughly is the most important way to protect yourself, your family and those around you.

When visiting a hospital or care home use the alcohol based hand rubs that are provided before entering and again when leaving. If you are caring for someone with an infection make sure you wash your hands before and after you help them.

Contact with your surroundings

Infection by contact occurs when an infected person touches objects such as toilet seats and furniture. If these are not cleaned after use they can become a source of infection.

Cleaning your surroundings

Clean all surfaces with warm soapy water. Washing up liquid is cheap and is as good as many commercial disinfectant sprays, which can be expensive.

Breathing

Infection can occur when an infected person breathes out germs. Another person can then breathe in these germs, which may cause an infection.

Coughs and sneezes spread diseases

Use disposable paper tissues to cover your mouth and nose whenever you cough, sneeze or blow your nose. Paper tissues must be put in the bin. **If you sneeze or cough into your hands remember to wash them.**

Eating

Infection can occur when germs that infect the gut are eaten. This can cause diarrhoea.

The safe storage, preparation and cooking of food reduces the risk of diarrhoea and sickness.

Always wash your hands before preparing food. Use separate chopping boards, utensils and fridge shelves to keep raw and cooked foods separate. After use, clean surfaces with warm soapy water. Use a clean dishcloth every day. Tea towels should be left to dry after use and washed daily.

Needles

A person may get accidentally pricked with a used syringe needle that has been left in places such as parks, playgrounds or public toilets.

If you do accidentally get pricked by a needle:

Seek medical advice immediately. As soon as possible, wash the area for at least 30 seconds under running water. Bottled water can also be used if no hand washing facilities are available. Cover site with a sticking plaster or similar dressing.

Stay at home when you feel unwell

If you are unwell do not visit the hospital or care home. Do not visit a hospital or care home if you have sickness and or diarrhoea.

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Everyone can play a part in reducing the spread of infections