

# FAMILY HEALTH PROGRAM™

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In proud partnership with



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's  
"Learn the Signs. Act Early." Campaign



## *Looking After* **You and Your Young Child**

*For mothers of children ages 18 months to 5 years*



# Welcome . . .

. . . to the Family Health Program™ brought to you in proud partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." Campaign, National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNP), Visiting Nurse Associations of America (VNA), and the makers of LYSOL® brand products.

*Looking After You and Your Young Child* places special focus on you and on your child from ages 18 months to five years. This informative guide explores need-to-know areas of health, well-being, and germ protection — to help keep you, your young child, and your home happy and healthy.

## A Health Program Especially for You

Children have special needs, and are more susceptible to infectious diseases than adults. They are also just learning about personal hygiene habits like frequent and proper handwashing. However, as public health experts, we know that there are several ways to help raise a healthy child and protect him or her from illness, including:

- A healthy diet and lifestyle for you and your growing child to help ensure that you are both better equipped to combat infections, and to minimize the risks of other health problems, such as tooth decay.
- Routine immunizations to protect your child from some serious and sometimes fatal diseases like polio, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, hepatitis, and influenza.
- Thorough personal and home hygiene to help prevent the spread of disease-causing germs to your child and other family members.

## Your Healthy Home

The CDC, NAPNP, VNA and LYSOL® partnership team is committed to **education** for the health and well-being of you and your child, and to keeping you and your family **healthy** by providing safe and convenient disinfecting and cleaning solutions for your home.

For more on what we are doing to help you ensure a healthy home, please visit: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), [www.napnap.org](http://www.napnap.org), [www.vnaa.org](http://www.vnaa.org), and [www.lysol.com](http://www.lysol.com).

**We wish you all the best in *Looking After You and Your Young Child!***

National Center on Birth Defects  
and Developmental Disabilities  
Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's  
"Learn the Signs. Act Early." Campaign

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# Looking After You and Your Young Child

The health and well-being of you and your young child are impacted by many things. Throughout *Looking After You and Your Young Child*, you'll find practical information and tips on topics that can affect both of you.

You'll discover need-to-know advice in such areas as hygiene and well-being, food safety for you and your child, common childhood illnesses, safety, germ prevention at home, and more. In addition, you'll find references to help you locate further information on those subjects of particular interest to you — including important information on early childhood development.

*So, read on!*

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The web links provided in each chapter were current at time of publication. In the event that they change and/or are no longer available, we suggest that you visit the "home page" of the named organization or company. From there, search for topical information.

# GERMS:

## What They Mean for You and Your Family

Germes are everywhere. Most germs are actually good — but there are some that are bad. As a mother, you'll want to protect your child from the harmful germs as much as possible.



### *Germ Growth at Home*

The main sources of germs in your home are usually people, pets, food, and water. Some germs, particularly bacteria, like to live in warm, moist places. They can grow and multiply quickly in places where water and waste matter accumulate, such as in sinks, toilets, wet cleaning cloths, mops, and towels.

What's more — bacteria can grow and divide every 20 minutes. One single bacteria cell can become more than 8 million cells in less than 24 hours.

### **Bad Germs = Pathogenic Ones**

Some germs, if they get into the wrong place, can cause an infection and may have potentially serious consequences. Typically, these germs are called **pathogens** because they can cause illness.

These pathogenic microorganisms fall into five categories:

- **Bacteria** — such as *Salmonella* or *E. coli*, which cause foodborne illness.
- **Fungi** — such as *Candida albicans*, which causes thrush; or some **mold**, such as *Cladosporium*, which can cause nasal stuffiness, eye irritation, wheezing, or skin irritation.
- **Viruses** — such as rotavirus, which can cause severe diarrhea in babies, or rhinovirus, which causes the common cold.
- **Parasites** — such as *Toxoplasma gondii*, which can cause birth defects in the fetus; and *Giardia*, which can cause severe diarrhea and dehydration.
- **Prions** — unlike the organisms listed above, these pathogenic agents composed entirely of protein cause a variety of neurodegenerative diseases, such as Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. Conventional sterilization and disinfection practices are not effective against prions. However, strong solutions of either bleach or sodium hydroxide for periods beyond 1 hour contact time are believed to provide some efficacy.

*Germs can be spread via direct contact or indirect contact, or through the air.*

### **How Germs Are Spread**

Germs are typically spread in one of three ways:

- **Direct Contact.** This is skin-to-skin contact, contact with infected people or animals, or contact with blood or other body fluids. The tendency of germs to spread via direct contact underscores the importance of handwashing for everyone.
- **Indirect Contact.** This happens when germs that are present in food or water, in soil, and on animals are picked up on your hands and transferred to the mouth, eyes, or nose to cause infections. Common contact points include:
  - Contaminated surfaces like dirty diapers, surfaces that held raw food, etc.
    - Items used to clean these surfaces, such as cloths and sponges, can also act as a means of spreading germs in the home.
    - Toothbrushes can carry germs too, and should be replaced every 3 months and after any upper respiratory, oral, or skin infection (such as thrush, herpes, impetigo, colds, sinus infections, or strep throat).
  - Pets and other animals
  - Insects like mosquitoes, fleas, ticks, and spiders
- **Through the air.** Some germs spread through the air, either carried on skin scales (dust) shed from the body, or in tiny droplets expelled through coughing, sneezing, or talking. People can pick up these germs by breathing them in.
  - Germs that can be transferred this way include some viruses and childhood diseases like measles, mumps, and rubella, or other contagious diseases like tuberculosis.

## *Germs At-A-Glance*

According to CDC's *Ounce of Prevention* campaign, there are many types of germs (viruses, bacteria, parasites, fungi) that cause many types of illnesses — including the common cold or flu, foodborne illness, Lyme disease, hantavirus, or plague.

These germs can spread easily from one person to another — and have wide-reaching effects. Germs can spread via direct contact or indirect contact, or through the air.

Sources of Germs are:

- |                   |                          |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| a. People         | e. Fish                  |
| b. Food and water | f. Soil                  |
| c. Animals        | g. Contaminated surfaces |
| d. Insects        |                          |

### Controlling Germs: Cleaning vs. Disinfection

Cleaning and disinfecting are **not** the same thing. Cleaning **removes** germs from surfaces, whereas disinfecting actually **destroys** them.

Cleaning with soap and water to remove dirt and most of the germs is usually enough. However, through its “Ounce of Prevention” campaign, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stresses that it’s important to routinely clean *and* disinfect surfaces.

- While surfaces may *look* clean, many infectious germs may still be lurking. In some instances, germs can live on surfaces for hours — and even days.

- Disinfectants are registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and contain ingredients that destroy bacteria and other germs. Check the product label to make sure it says “Disinfectant” and has an EPA registration number.

Since **cleaning and disinfecting** are not the same thing, you’ll need to decide which is appropriate in each situation.

#### *Cleaning*

When you clean, you are **physically reducing the soils and the number of germs** on the surface you are cleaning.

- Cleaning entails using soap/detergent and water or a good cleaning solution, in combination with thorough scrubbing.
- When you feel that you need to do more than just “clean,” it’s time to disinfect.

#### *Disinfecting*

When you disinfect, you are **killing germs**. According to CDC, the rule of thumb is to disinfect those areas where there can be large numbers of dangerous germs — and where there is a possibility that these germs could be spread to others.

- When you **disinfect** with an EPA-registered disinfecting wipe or disinfectant spray, you are actually killing most of the germs present on the surface you are wiping or spraying, giving even better protection.

### *For More Information . . .*

**Germs:** [www.cdc.gov/ounceofprevention](http://www.cdc.gov/ounceofprevention). You can also watch how bacteria can grow at [www.lysol.com/topic\\_germs.shtml](http://www.lysol.com/topic_germs.shtml)

**The Hygiene Council’s work in global germ prevention:** [www.hygienecouncil.com/us/](http://www.hygienecouncil.com/us/)

**Germ “Hot Spots” in the Home:** [www.lysol.com/coldFlu/cfProtect.shtml](http://www.lysol.com/coldFlu/cfProtect.shtml)

**Cleaning and Disinfecting for a Healthy Home:** [www.lysol.com](http://www.lysol.com) and [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/op](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/op)

**General Microbiology and Specific Pathogens:** [www.vnaa.org/vnaa/g/?h=html/germ\\_protection\\_center\\_home](http://www.vnaa.org/vnaa/g/?h=html/germ_protection_center_home) or [www.vnaa.org/vnaa/g/?h=html/germ\\_protection\\_center\\_viruses](http://www.vnaa.org/vnaa/g/?h=html/germ_protection_center_viruses)

**Foodborne Bacteria:** [www.cfsan.fda.gov](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov)

**Kitchen Cleanliness:** [www.lysol.com/topic\\_eating.shtml](http://www.lysol.com/topic_eating.shtml)

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's  
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**Act Early**

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[www.napnap.org](http://www.napnap.org)



**Germ Protection Center**

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