

# 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:

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 (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](http://www.cancer.gov)

**Online Chat:** [www.cancer.gov/livehelp](http://www.cancer.gov/livehelp)

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

[www.cancer.gov/chemo-side-effects](http://www.cancer.gov/chemo-side-effects)

