

## Handwashing Tips

Washing your hands is one of the easiest and most important ways of stopping the spread of germs and illnesses. Washing your hands properly and often can help you stay healthy all year.

### When Should You Wash Your Hands?

Wash your hands before you

- ❖ prepare or eat food.
- ❖ treat a cut or a wound, or care for someone who is sick.

Wash your hands after you

- ❖ blow your nose, cough, or sneeze.
- ❖ use the restroom.
- ❖ handle uncooked foods, particularly raw meat, poultry, or fish.
- ❖ handle garbage.
- ❖ change a diaper.
- ❖ play with or touch a pet, particularly reptiles and exotic animals.
- ❖ tend to someone who is sick or injured.

### How Should You Wash Your Hands?

- ❖ Use soap and warm, running water.
- ❖ Wash all surfaces thoroughly, including wrists, palms, back of hands, fingers, and under the fingernails.
- ❖ Rub hands together for at least 10 to 15 seconds.

**GET SMART**  
USE ANTIBIOTICS WISELY

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## Winter Health Care

Colds, coughs, the flu, and bronchitis are common winter illnesses. Here is some information on how to care for you and your family.

- ❖ Not every illness needs penicillin or other antibiotics. Penicillin and other antibiotics do not work for colds, cough, flu, and bronchitis.
- ❖ Taking penicillin and other antibiotics when they are not necessary may make them ineffective in the future.
- ❖ Take antibiotics only when a doctor prescribes them.

## Preventing Illness

What can I do to avoid getting sick and spreading illness to my family & friends?

- ❖ Wash your hands! (see backside of this brochure)
- ❖ Avoid sharing utensils.
- ❖ Keep your distance from others who have the cold or flu.
- ❖ Eat a healthy diet, drink plenty of water, & get plenty of sleep.
- ❖ Avoid tobacco smoke.
- ❖ Get a flu vaccine.

## What can I do when I am sick?

Penicillin or other antibiotics do not work for colds, flu, and bronchitis. Home treatments are usually best. Here are some things you can do to help get better:

- ❖ To speed healing
  - Get extra rest.
- ❖ For sore throat or muscle aches
  - Take medications that contain ibuprofen or acetaminophen.
- ❖ For cough
  - Take medications that contain dextromethorphan
- ❖ To improve mucous drainage
  - Drink 8-12 glasses of fluids every day.
  - Use a humidifier or vaporizer.
- ❖ To reduce nasal congestion
  - Take medications with a decongestant that contains pseudoephedrine.

*Your pharmacist can help you find these non-prescription medications*

## When to Seek Care

Call your health care provider if you have a cold or cough illness accompanied by any of the following:

- ❖ A fever of 101 degrees or higher
- ❖ Rash covering most of your body
- ❖ Persistent ear pain
- ❖ Persistent toothache or sinus pain
- ❖ Difficulty swallowing
- ❖ Feeling short of breath
- ❖ Chest pain, tightness or wheezing
- ❖ Cough producing blood
- ❖ Cough lasting 3 weeks or longer
- ❖ When you feel sick and have a chronic medical condition such as diabetes, heart disease, or lung disease.

*Special Note:* If you are elderly, call your health care provider if you have loss of appetite, clouded thinking, difficulty walking, or tiredness that is out of the ordinary.

## Wise Antibiotic Use

Follow these guidelines for wise antibiotic use:

- ❖ Use antibiotics only when your doctor thinks it's necessary.
- ❖ Don't ask your doctor to prescribe antibiotics.
- ❖ Take an antibiotic exactly as your health care provider prescribes
- ❖ Take the antibiotic until it is gone, even if you are feeling better.
- ❖ NEVER
  - Never take antibiotics for colds, cough, the flu, or bronchitis.
  - Save the medication for later to treat yourself or others.
  - Share your antibiotics with someone else.
  - Take leftover antibiotics.
  - Take a prescription that belongs to someone else.

