

# CAREGIVER INFECTION CONTROL *Checklist*



As a professional caregiver or a family caregiver, you may care for seniors with infectious illnesses, like COVID-19. It's important that you are alert to potential spread of the infection so that you can help protect yourself, your loved ones, and the seniors you serve. This checklist is designed to help you ensure that you are taking proper precautions to avoid the spread of infection.

# Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

## ○ Wear gloves when appropriate

- When there is potential for contact with blood, bodily fluids, or other infectious material
- When touching items or surfaces that may be contaminated
- When cleaning the care environment
- If you have open sores, cuts, or scrapes on your hands

## ○ Wear face masks when appropriate

- When infection is transmitted through the air
- If you or the person you are caring for are coughing or sneezing frequently
- Ensure that your mask fits tightly over your nose and mouth

## ○ Wear eye protection when fluids may make contact with the eyes (like through sneezing, coughing, or splashing)

## ○ Wear gowns, aprons, or other coverings when appropriate

- When areas of the body may come in contact with bodily fluids or other contaminated areas
- When caring for someone with a highly contagious illness

## ○ Ask the person you are caring for to put on a mask before entering the room

## ○ After using PPE, dispose of it properly

- Place directly in designated trash or laundry containers
- Do not let exposed areas of the used PPE come in contact with your skin

## ○ Maintain social distancing



**PPE creates a barrier between you and germs, helping you reduce your exposure to infection.**

# Hand Hygiene

- **Have alcohol-based hand sanitizer on hand**
- **Ensure that hand soap is available within the care environment**
- **Scrub hands for at least 20 seconds, including the backs of your hands, between fingers, and underneath fingernails**
- **Remove jewelry on your hands**
- **Dry hands on a paper towel or a clean towel**
- **Wash hands regularly**
  - Before, during, and after preparing food
  - Before and after eating food
  - Before and after physically touching other individuals, including the person you are caring for
  - Before and after touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
  - Before and after touching your PPE
  - Before and after touching a surface that may be frequently touched by others (like door handles, remote controls, shopping carts, hand railings, etc.)
  - After using the bathroom
  - After blowing your nose, sneezing, or coughing
  - After touching an animal
  - After touching garbage
  - After changing a diaper or cleaning up bodily fluids
  - After handling dirty laundry
  - When disinfecting the care environment
- **Ask and help the person you are caring for to maintain adequate hand hygiene as well**



**Washing your hands regularly and in compliance with the CDC guidelines is one of the best ways to protect yourself and others from the spread of infection.**

# General Hygiene & Grooming

- **Make sure clothes are clean, neat, and fit appropriately**
  - Have not been worn before
  - Have not been sitting on the floor or other surface that could be contaminated
  - Are not baggy or too loose
- **Clean and trim your fingernails**
- **Cover any cuts or open wounds you may have**
- **Pull your hair back or trim to ensure that it does not touch your shoulders or collar**
- **Shower at least once per day**
- **Stay home if you are sick**



**In addition to hand hygiene, you should ensure that you practice good general hygiene and grooming to help reduce the spread of infection.**

# Care Environment

- Empty trash cans frequently and avoid overflowing
- Clean sinks
- Clean linens
- Clean floors and clear them from clutter
- Clean bathroom (including toilet, sinks, countertops, and bathtub)
- Ensure hand hygiene products are available at sinks (as previously mentioned)
- Sanitize hard surfaces
- Check for visible dirt, dust, or debris on flat surfaces and clean as needed
- Ensure there is no evidence of insects or pests present along with signs of mold or mildew
- Clean out kitchen appliances (i.e., microwave, fridge, oven, etc.)
- Check that wheelchairs, walkers, and other devices are cleaned and in good condition



**While caring for a senior, evaluate the care environment to identify potential opportunities for the spread of disease. Take precautions when cleaning to help reduce the transmission of infection.**



By following these guidelines, you can help reduce the spread of infection and help keep yourself safe and those you serve healthy, happy, and at home. For additional information on preventing the spread of infections when caring for seniors, reach out to Caring Senior Service.

