

## Hand Washing and Sanitizing

Frequent hand washing and sanitizing is the single most important way to prevent the spread of infection. Many serious illnesses such as Hepatitis A, Meningitis and diarrhea can be easily prevented with proper hand washing and sanitizing.

### Cleaning with soap and water:

- Wet hands under warm running water.
- Apply soap and lather for 20 seconds, covering all surfaces (fronts, backs and sides of hands and fingers, as well as spaces between fingers and under fingernails).
- Dry hands with a clean towel. Use a paper towel to turn off the taps and to open the door, if applicable.

### Cleaning with hand sanitizer:

- Squirt a dime sized amount of sanitizer into the palm of your hand.
- Rub hands together covering all surfaces (fronts, backs and sides of hands and fingers, as well as spaces between fingers and under fingernails).
- Rub surfaces until completely dry. This should take approximately 25 seconds.

### When to wash and sanitize:

- When preparing, serving or eating food, brushing or flossing your teeth, putting in or taking out contact lenses, treating wounds or cuts, providing care to someone who is sick.
- After contact with a sick person or their environment, using the washroom, coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose, handling garbage, treating wounds or cuts, playing with pets.



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**Canadian Mental  
Health Association**

Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge  
*Mental health for all*

# Safety In Your Environment



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## Medication Safety

- Keep a current list of all medications that you take and all medications that you can not take because of allergic reaction. Keep the list with you so that you can share this information with your medical provider.
- Keep medications in a dry location at room temperature and away from direct sunlight.
- Ask your pharmacist for written information on all drugs you are taking. (Keep this list in case you want to refresh your memory at a later time). Ask if you should avoid certain foods, drinks or medicines or activities while taking the drug.
- Make sure you ask for a prescription refill before your medication runs out.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions.

### When should I see a doctor?

- Difficulty breathing or loss of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or stomach
- Confusion or disorientation
- Coughing up bloody sputum
- Severe or lasting vomiting
- Symptoms (fever and cough) improve and then become worse



## Fire Safety Tips

- Smoke alarms save lives by giving you an early warning of a fire in your apartment – do you have one that works? Test it monthly and change the battery at least once per year.
- Do you know how you are going to escape from your building if there is a fire? Most apartment buildings have at least two exit stairways. Find out where these are and practice using them. If you are in a high-rise, don't use the elevator if there's a fire.
- Keep space heaters a safe distance from articles that could ignite.
- Never use electrical cords that are damaged or frayed.
- When cooking stay by your stove – never leave burners unattended.
- Do not cook food when intoxicated or under the influence or drugs that cause you to be sleepy.
- Do not use your stove top as a counter top – especially for placing articles that could burn, such as cardboard boxes.
- Never leave candles unattended.
- Never smoke in bed – always use ashtrays and be sure to wet down ashes before placing in the garbage.



## Safe Food Storage

### At the supermarket:

- Choose canned and dry goods first. Buy refrigerated/frozen and hot deli items last.
- Don't choose cans that bulge, leak or are dented at the seam or rim.
- Check eggs to make sure that they are not cracked or dirty.

### On your way home:

- Once you have purchased your food, go directly home. If this is not possible, place perishable foods in a cooler until you get home.

### Storing shelf stable foods:

- Store foods in a clean, dry place where temperature is neither too hot (above 100°F) nor too cold.
- After opening, refrigerate any foods that need to be kept cool.

### Storing refrigerated food:

- Maintain a temperature of 4°C or 40°F to reduce bacterial growth.
- Keep your refrigerator clean and check expiry dates on all foods. Discard if past expiry date.

### Storing frozen foods:

- Keeping food at -18°C (0°F) stops bacterial growth, but it will not kill bacteria already present.
- Food can be safely defrosted in the refrigerator, under cold running water or in the microwave. If you defrost food in the microwave, cook it immediately.

