



NEW WORLD HOPE ORGANIZATION

www.newworldhope.org

“Healthy People. Better World”

Hygiene

What is hygiene? It is the process of maintaining good health through maintaining a clean body and environment around us. Good hygiene is one of the most important practices to help with the prevention and spreading of infections and diseases.

Why is health so important? Good physical and emotional health helps our bodies and minds function properly without pain, anxiety, depression or discomfort. Improper hygiene can cause diseases, which can negatively impact our physical & mental well-being.

What exercise good hygiene practice? Poor hygiene causes us to smell bad (due to bacteria), develop infections, and contract diseases such as flu, common cold, e-coli, salmonella, and skin diseases such as ring worm, and scabies. Other problems such as tooth decay, lice in the hair, and foot infections are also caused due to poor hygiene.

How do I maintain good hygiene?

- Washing hands, face, hair and other parts of body, frequently
- Brushing/cleaning teeth at least once a day
- Cleaning the living quarters including frequent change of clean bed sheets, pillow covers, and changing personal clothes and under garments, frequently
- Using care to avoid soiling clothes and body parts, when urinating, vomiting or relieving oneself in toilet
- Washing hand before eating- especially after touching animals
- Holding a tissue/handkerchief over the mouth when coughing or sneezing. If you use hands, make sure to wash them afterwards
- Suppression of habits such as nose-picking, touching the face etc.
- Not biting nails
- Washing hands after using toilet

Food safety

- Cleaning of food preparation areas and equipment/tools/utensils, for example using different/separate cutting boards and utensils for preparing raw meats and vegetables.
- Thorough cooking of meats
- Regular dish washing with soap and clean water
- Washing of hands after touching uncooked food when preparing meals
- Proper storage of food so as to prevent contamination by rodents or insects
- Refrigeration of foods (and avoidance of specific foods in environments where refrigeration is not available)

Grooming: Grooming one’s self includes washing, cleansing, combing, regularly cutting and styling the hair. It also includes cosmetic care of the body, such as shaving and other forms of depilation.

What are the consequences of not maintaining good hygiene? The following health related problems can occur if one does not maintain good personal hygiene:

Head Lice: Lice are tiny insects that live on the human scalp; they make a pinprick like puncture on the scalp, emit an anti clotting substance and feed on the blood as nourishment. Lice thrive on unclean hair. Children are especially prone to lice infestation. Lice spread from one head to another when there is close contact, such as in school environments. Lice eggs are wrapped in a shiny white sheath and show up on the upper layers of hair as the infestation increases. They make the scalp itchy and are a cause of annoyance and embarrassment. In infants they may cause disturbed sleep and bouts of crying. Unchecked, they can produce scalp infection.

Health Care Education

Hygiene

Bad Breath: Poor oral hygiene and infection of gums often results in a bad odor emanating from the mouth. Smoking can make this worse. Proper brushing of the teeth and oral care can get rid of bad breath. Other reasons for bad breath are include colds, sinuses, throat infections, and tonsils, diseases of the stomach, liver, intestines or uncontrolled diabetes. If bad breath persists despite good oral hygiene care, you need to see a doctor.

Ear wax: Ear wax accumulates in the ear canal that leads from the outer ear to the ear drum. As the secretion comes out of the ear it collects dust particles. Do not reach farther than you can with your little finger into your ear to clean it. Putting in hairpins, safety pins or blunt edged objects for cleaning inner parts of the ear might harm the ear. Ear wax should be cleaned by your doctor.

Body odor: Fresh perspiration, when allowed to evaporate does not cause body odor. An offensive smell is caused when bacteria that are present on the skin get to work on the sweat and decompose it. This is especially so in the groin, underarms, and feet or in clothing that has absorbed sweat. Diet influences the odor too. Bathing everyday and change of clothes in close contact with the body should take care of the problem. Talcum powders, of the non medicated kind, can be used under the armpits. The addition of perfumes masks the odor.

Excessive perspiration can lead to the scaling of the skin or inflammation (Dermatitis). Usually this is no cause for worry. Some people sweat more than others due to hereditary and body composition factors. Excessive perspiration may also be a symptom of diabetes, anemia and hyperthyroidism.

Urinary infection: Urinary infection causes pain or a burning sensation during urination. Chances of urinary infection increase during pregnancy and after major surgery.

The urine can be discolored; itching, frequent urination, fever and chills can also result from urinary infection. To avoid this infection, improve overall hygiene, both – toilets and personal parts. Wash or wipe front to back after urinating or defecating. Remember this when wiping or washing babies too, as a general rule. Do not wear tight fitting synthetic underwear. Drink plenty of water. Do not hold back when you have the tendency to urinate. If the condition persists consult a doctor.

Pinworms: These worms come out of the anal opening to lay eggs at night causing intense itching. Disturbed sleep, mild pain and diarrhea are possible consequences. When scratching, eggs stick to the hand and under the nails and infect anything the person touches. The eggs can pass through air or by contact with infected food or bed linen. The eggs cannot be killed by disinfectants and remain active in the dust for a long period. Bed clothes, undergarments and nightwear of the infected person must be washed thoroughly in hot water. A doctor has to be consulted to treat the worm infestation; sometimes all member of the family may be asked to take de-worming medication when one member is affected. Those infected, must scrub hands well with soap before eating.

Athletes Foot (Ring worm of the foot): A certain fungus that breeds in warm wet places – causes this infection, resulting in scaly skin or sores or blisters between toes - often spreading to the soles. Sometimes these skins cracks and sores become the site for other infections. Rub off peelings gently. Wash feet well and apply powder. A mild fungicidal ointment at bedtime will help. Keep feet exposed. If you have to wear shoes, wear cotton socks; if the blisters begin to ooze seek professional help from your doctor.

Sources: District Head Quarter Rawalpindi, Pakistan. 2006; Diabetics: Heed these diet tips!

Disclaimer: All information provided in this flyer is posted for educational purposes only; it is not meant to be used as medical advice. For any advice, diagnosis, and treatment consult your personal physician.

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New World Hope Publication
H/SN-8/2006/P-046