



UNIT-5

Hygiene Practices in Childcare

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Understand the importance of good hygiene in a childcare setting
- ✓ Confidently use different types of products for cleaning and sanitising
- ✓ Play an active role in contributing to health and hygiene standards

Unit 5

Hygiene Practices in Childcare

Effective hygiene is essential for preventing the spread of germs that can cause infectious diseases, such as infectious bacteria and viruses. The goal of prevention is to break the germ's transmission chain. Targeting hygiene practices at key points and at appropriate times to eliminate germs before they can spread further is what good hygiene entails.

Infection can come from a variety of places.

- Water and/or sites that accumulate stagnant water, such as sinks, toilets, cleaning tools, and facecloths
- People who are infected with or carriers of a disease
- Foods, particularly raw foods or foods that have been improperly prepared or stored
- Animals

You are in close contact with the children in your care as a care provider, and it is up to you to make hygiene a priority in order to create and maintain healthy learning environments for all. Keeping children healthy, able, and ready to learn is easier when they practice good hygiene on a regular basis. It is critical to maintain good hygiene practices throughout the day. You are not only protecting their health (and yours) by following proper nappy changing, hand-washing, and gloving procedures, but you are also teaching them healthy habits that will last a lifetime in promoting their own good health by regularly cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting surfaces and toys that children come into contact with.

Procedures for Hand-Washing

Procedures:

1. Turn on the tap.
2. Soak your hands in water.
3. Lather up with soap.
4. Wash and lather hands thoroughly for 20 seconds (roughly the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice). Rub the tops and insides of your hands, as well as under your nails and between your fingers.
5. Rinse hands for at least ten seconds under running water.
6. Use a clean, disposable paper towel to dry your hands.
7. Using the paper towel, turn off the water.
8. Place paper towel in a trash can with a plastic liner and a lid.

Frequency:

- Upon arrival
- Before and after eating, handling food, or feeding a child
- After using the toilet/nappy changing or helping a child use the toilet
- After coughing, sneezing, or coming into contact with bodily fluids (runny nose, blood, vomit)

Procedures for putting on gloves**Procedures:**

1. Before putting on gloves, wash your hands.
2. Put on a pair of clean gloves. Limit the possibility of "touch contamination": Avoid touching environmental surfaces (e.g., light switches, cabinet knobs) or yourself (e.g., rubbing noses or adjusting glasses) to avoid contaminating the clean gloves or spreading germs to others.
3. Replace gloves if they become torn or heavily soiled while in use.
4. Carefully remove each glove without touching any contaminated surfaces:
 - Grasp the first glove by the palm and pull it off; ball up the dirty glove with the remaining gloved hand.
 - Remove the glove from underneath the wrist with the ungloved (clean) hand, turning the glove inside out.
5. Immediately dispose of the filthy gloves in a trash can with a plastic liner and a lid. Disposable gloves should never be washed or reused.
6. After using disposable gloves, wash your hands.

Gloves are recommended in the following situations:

- When you are likely to come into contact with blood or blood-containing fluids from a child, especially if your hands have open cuts or sores (for example, when administering first aid to a child's cut or changing a nappy with bloody diarrhoea).
- Caring for oozing skin rashes or lesions
- Providing mouth or eye care and special medical procedures such as finger prick for blood glucose test, etc.
- Cleaning surfaces or handling clothes and supplies that have been soiled with blood or contaminated with body fluids, such as vomit, urine, or stool

Procedures for Changing Nappy**Procedures:**

1. Wash your hands
2. Keep all necessary supplies in the nappy-changing area within easy reach.

Include the following items:

- Non-absorbent paper liner large enough to cover the changing surface from the child's shoulders to beyond the child's feet or a water-resistant, non-absorbent, smooth surface that does not trap soil and can be disinfected
 - Wet paper towels, dampened cloths, or wipes
 - A thick application of any nappy ointment or other skin care product, to be used only with parent(s) approval for preventing and treating rashes, removed from the container with a disposable material such as a non-absorbent paper liner or facial/toilet tissue
3. Place the child on a clean changing surface away from food preparation and eating areas. While the child is on the changing surface, keep an eye on him or her.
 4. Take care of the child:
 - Unfasten the nappy but keep the soiled one under the child.
 - Lift the child's legs as needed to clean the child from front to back with disposable wipes.
 - Wipe the child with a new disposable wipe each time.
 - Place the soiled wipes in the soiled nappy or in a covered trash container with a plastic liner.
 5. Remove the soiled nappy and any other soiled clothing:
 - If clothing was soiled, securely tie the plastic bag used to store the clothing, store in a location out of reach of children, and send home with parent(s) upon child pick-up.
 6. Change the child's nappy:
 - Place a clean, unused nappy on the child's bottom.
 - Apply any necessary nappy creams with a tissue, then discard the used tissue in a plastic-lined, covered trash container.
 - Tighten the nappy.
 - Use separate disposable wipes to clean your hands and the hands of your child.
 - Complete the child's clothing.
 7. Wash your hands and the hands of your child.
 8. Wipe down the changing table and disinfect it.
 - Remove any visible soil and clean and disinfect the surface with a paper liner in a plastic lined, covered trash container.
 9. Make sure you wash your hands.
 10. Keep a daily log of any unusual skin or stool conditions (rash; unusual faecal consistency, colour, odour, or frequency) for the child's parent(s).

Note on the type of nappies used:

Unless the child has a medical reason that prevents the use of disposable nappies, it is recommended that only disposable nappies with absorbent material be used in child care environments.

When using cloth nappies, the nappy should have an absorbent inner lining completely enclosed within a waterproof outer covering. The use of cloth nappies with a waterproof cover that is adhered to the cloth material is an alternative.

When using a cloth nappy with a separate lining, the outer covering and inner lining should be changed together as a unit and not reused in the child care facility. The contents of cloth nappies should not be rinsed or disposed of at the child care facility.

Soiled cloth nappies should be completely wrapped in a non-permeable material, stored somewhere out of reach of children, and given to the parent(s) immediately after the child is discharged.

Procedures for Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting

Procedures:

1. Determine whether the surface or toy needs to be cleaned, sanitized, or disinfected.

Learn the following terms:

- **Cleaning** entails removing all dirt and contamination physically. Cleaning friction removes most germs and exposes any remaining germs, allowing a sanitizer or disinfectant to easily remove them.
 - **Sanitizing** refers to the use of a product that reduces germs to levels that are considered safe by public health codes or regulations, but does not completely eliminate them.
 - Use a sanitizer on food-contact surfaces (dishes, utensils, cutting boards, high chair tray), toys that children might put in their mouths, and pacifiers.
 - **Disinfection** refers to the use of a product that kills or inactivates germs. On hard, non-porous surfaces like nappy-change tables, counter tops, door and cabinet handles, and toilet and other bathroom surfaces, disinfectants may be appropriate.
2. Check the Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting Routine Schedule to see if the surface needs to be cleaned, sanitized, or disinfected.
 3. Make a sanitizing or disinfecting solution:

When making a bleach solution, follow these steps:

- Protect your hands and eyes with gloves and goggles.
- Make use of a funnel.
- To reduce fumes, add bleach to the water rather than the water to the bleach.
- Check to see if the room is properly ventilated.
- Never mix or store ammonia with bleach or bleach-containing products.
- Make a new bleach solution every day and label the bottle with the contents as well as the date it was mixed.

4. Using bleach in a safe manner

- If there is visible soil on the surface, clean it with soap or detergent and water before applying the solution.
- If you're using a spray bottle, change the setting to a heavy spray rather than a fine mist.
- Allow for the product's contact time as specified on the label.
- Use when there are no children in the vicinity.
- Allow fresh air to circulate in the area and allow the surfaces to air dry or wipe dry completely after the required contact time before allowing children back in.
- Store all chemicals and cleaning materials safely out of reach of children, in a cabinet that locks or has a child-resistant latch.

Further Reading:

- ✓ *Clacherty G. living with our bibi: a qualitative study of children living with grandmothers in the nshamba area of north western Tanzania. Federal Way, Wa: World Vision; Geneva: Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative*
- ✓ *Guidelines for gender-based violence interventions in humanitarian settings: focusing on prevention and response to sexual violence in emergencies. Geneva: World Health Organization (WHO)/ Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC); September 2005.*