

12. Infection Prevention Control

12.1. Aging and Infections

ITN Health America LLC will follow all applicable CDC guidelines.

It is important for all employees of **ITN Health America LLC** to be aware that as adults age, they can become more vulnerable to infections due to changes in their bodies such as:

- Breaks in the skin
- Wounds
- Trouble chewing, swallowing and drinking
- Difficulty moving
- Loss of bladder and bowel control
- Mental status changes/impairments
- Medical conditions such as lung disease and diabetes
- Inability to clean their hands or take deep breath when asked

Infections may occur when the following are present:

- Bacteria
- Viruses
- Molds
- Fungi

Germs are present on our skin and within our bodies. In addition, germs can be found in the air, on surfaces in the environment and sometimes in food and water. They can enter a person's body through mucus membranes such as nose, eyes, or mouth, as well as through breaks in the skin.

Most Common Types of Infections

- Urinary tract
- Lungs
- Skin and soft tissue
- Gastrointestinal system

Spread of Infection

Germs can be found on the hands or gloves of care workers, on surfaces in the home/facility, and on equipment. If these are not properly cleaned and disinfected, the germs may spread to other people and the environment. In healthy individuals, the immune system fights off germs and prevent infection. Older people, due to the declining ability of their immune systems to resist germs, are more susceptible to infections.

Germs can be spread by:

- Coughing and sneezing germs into the air
- Touching other people / surfaces with hands
- Touching body fluid and secretions

SIGNS of Infections:

Care staff members of **ITN Health America LLC** will report any signs of infections in or around the client, including themselves while on duty to the Agency Manager:

- Coughing
- Congestion
- Soar Throat
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Discolored/Thick mucus
- Pus
- Rash
- Redness /Swelling
- Loss of Taste or Smell
- Change in mental status

SYMPTOMS of Infections:

- Nausea
- Pain
- Feeling Feverish
- Burning when urinating

12.2. Care Team Protocol

Cleaning hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water, also known as practicing hand hygiene

- Wearing gloves and other personal protective equipment
- Keeping the environment
- Handling waste safely
- Avoiding touching face
- Covering mouths and noses when sneezing or coughing
- Not going to work when sick
- Staying up to date on all recommended vaccinations

Care workers will assist senior clients to reduce risk of infection by:

- Clean hands before meals and after toileting
- Cover their mouths and noses when sneezing or coughing
- Maintain personal hygiene, including oral care
- Take all recommended vaccines
- Eat healthy foods
- Stay hydrated
- Adequate rest

12.3. Hand Hygiene

All employees of ITN Health America LLC are instructed to clean their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based sanitizer. In addition, employees are to change their gloves frequently and perform hand hygiene each time gloves are changed as dirty gloves can spread germs.

- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
 - Before handling food
 - After using the toilet
 - If hands are visibly soiled
 - If hands have had contact blood or body fluids
 - Before and after client with toileting

- Rings as they can trap germs and get caught on clothing or equipment. If care workers must wear a ring (a wedding ring, for example), leave the ring on the finger and wash/clean the ring along with the hands
- Dry hands thoroughly with paper towels. Turn off the water faucet with paper towels
- Don't touch dirty sink handles with clean hands
- Hand sanitizer may be used in all other hand hygiene situations not mentioned above
- Make sure clients place of residence is stocked with alcohol-based hand rub or alcohol hand wipes
- The Agency Manager will determine how and where staff will clean their hands.

12.4. Disinfection of Surfaces

All surfaces and equipment of the clients of **ITN Health America LLC** must be routinely cleaned and disinfected by the employees who are assigned to care for the client, including between use on each client, to prevent the spread of germs and diseases. This includes cleaning and disinfecting high-touch areas such as:

- Doorknobs & closet, drawer knobs, entry door inside and out
- Flat top surfaces
- Wheelchair, walker & Cane
- Bed rails & electric positioning buttons
- Land line phones & cell Phones
- Call lights & call buttons
- All remote devices
- Personal care wipe packages
- Pack away all small items in a safe place to discourage touching

12.5. Company Cleaning Protocols

- Gloves and mask will be worn if cleaning product is toxic or harmful
- Gloves will be changed between rooms or moving from a contaminated surface area to a clean one
- Appropriate use of cleaning product for the right surface
- Make sure the product you are using stays wet on the surface for the time needed to kill germs

- No cleaning chemicals will be mixed as some combinations can release toxic gas
- Chemicals will be locked up away from clients when not in use

12.6. Personal Protective Equipment [PPE] for Employees

- The PPE must be worn to prevent contact between skin, mucous membranes, and clothes from blood, body fluids, and other potentially infectious disease
- All care staff are to wear PPE any time there is a chance of contact with blood and body fluids.
- Explain to clients that PPE is a standard precaution used to protect everyone.
- [ENTER POSITION/TITLE] will oversee making sure that PPE is replenished when supplies in the work area run low

PPE include:

- Gloves
- Gowns
- Masks
- Goggles/Visor and other eye protection

Federal and state law requires that all home care companies in Illinois provide PPE for all staff who may encounter infection, or disease.

PPE USE:

- Use a piece of personal protective equipment once then throw it away
- Do not use the same PPE for the care of more than one client
- Change mask if it becomes moist/wet
- Change gloves when soiled, and when moving from a contaminated to a clean area
- Perform hand hygiene prior to wearing and after removing gloves

12.7. Isolate the Spread of Disease

- The Agency Manager will notify family, or the person with legal mandate to oversee care of client that isolating the spread or germs will be the best way to prevent the spread of infection.

- A client will be notified by the Agency Manager as to why he/she is being moved into isolation.
- The care team will communicate the reason for resident placement in a different room or location.
- The Agency Manager is responsible that all staff are aware of the revised care plan.

12.8. Respiratory Hygiene

- Vaccinations are an important prevention tool
- Employee will stay home if sick, or show symptoms of illness
- Employee will go home if they develop respiratory symptoms while working
- Clients will be encouraged to stay in their rooms if they develop a new cough with fever or other symptoms of a respiratory infection

Suspected Illness Reporting:

- Care staff will be instructed to contact the Agency Manager about coughing and sneezing by family members, visitors, or other care staff
- Visible signs will be posted to urge the use of hand hygiene and masks, and place masks and hand sanitizer at entrances, during community outbreaks and flu season

12.9. Soiled Linen

- Care staff will treat all soiled linen as infectious
- Heat and chemical disinfection will be used
- Soiled and clean linen will be color coded in different bins/laundry bags

Safety Measures:

- Make sure that there are enough linen bags close to points of care
- Transport all clean linen in covered clean bins
- Hold soiled linen away from your clothing when you are changing and carrying linens
- Minimize handling and agitation of soiled linen and place in a soiled-linen bag at the point of care

12.10. Transmission Precautions

Contact precautions, such as wearing gloves, eye protection, and a gown, are special safeguards that staff must put in place when dealing with clients who are infected with germs that are easy to transmit through equipment or by touching other clients or care team staff members.

Contact Precautions:

- Care worker will always clean hands before entering or exiting clients home /room
- Wear gloves and a gown when entering client(s) home/ room and remove upon exit
- Shared equipment will be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use
- [POSITION/TITLE] will make sure the reason for the contact precautions is documented on the care plan and assignment sheets and shared with all staff

Droplet Precautions:

- Care workers will wear a mask in addition to using standard precautions
- Clients should stay in a designated area of their place of residence
- If client must leave the room, the client must wear a mask
- Consider using both droplet and contact precautions if the respiratory virus causing the illness is unknown or if the resident has nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- The reason for the droplet precautions is documented on the care plan and assignment sheets and communicated to all employees

Airborne Precautions:

Airborne precautions are put in place by when an infectious organism floats in the air and can be spread through the air.

- Care workers will only enter the isolated room when necessary
- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub before entering and after leaving the room
- Care Staff on duty will wear respiratory protection (such as an N95), or a surgical mask
- Client will be isolated in the room, with the door closed, unless client needs to be transported to a hospital where they can further assist and maintain airborne precautions
- Clients will wear a surgical mask while awaiting transfer and during any transfers
- The Agency Manager will alert all close contacts of client to possible exposure of the virus or bacteria
- The reason for the airborne precautions is documented on the care plan and assignment sheets and communicated to all employees

12.11. Outbreak Management

- Quick identification of clusters of infections is critical
- Keep the environment and equipment clean and disinfected
- Make sure there are disinfectants at the point of care
- Droplet and contact precautions will be taken
- Staff are to report any new respiratory or gastrointestinal symptoms, especially if a fever develops

12.12. Controlling Communicable Disease

Tests may need to be taken by potential and existing clients/Clients as well as the employees of **ITN Health America LLC** to ensure the safety of both the client and care worker staff, and to prevent the spread of disease.

TUBERCULOSIS TEST:

If the box is checked, then **ITN Health America LLC** will require clients to take a tuberculosis test required by law.

Type of Test: **At ITN Health America LLC's discretion**

Where the test will be taken: **TBD**

When will the client/or authorized person in charge of care be notified of results: **3 Days**

Frequency of Testing: Once Routinely As needed

COVID-19 TEST:

If the box is checked then **ITN Health America LLC** may require clients, staff, and visitors to take a covid-19 test if an outbreak or suspected outbreak is present.

Type of test: **At ITN Health America LLC's discretion**

Where the test will be taken: **TBD**

When will the client/or authorized person in charge of care be notified of results: **3 days**

Frequency of Testing: Once Routinely As needed