



**INSTRUCTIONS
TO PREVENT INFECTIONS
AMONG CHILDREN
IN DAY CARE**

**Ohjeita päivähoidossa olevien lasten infektioiden
ehkäisyyn ja hoitoon**



City of Tampere
Day care
Health Services for Children and Youth
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DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS TO PREVENT INFECTIONS IN DAY CARE

Generalities concerning children's predisposition to infectious diseases

A normal infant or preschooler may have 5 to 10 usual contagious diseases i.e. infections a year. The prevalence of infections is accentuated in autumn, winter and summer, and the age when children most often have infections varies from 9 to 18 months. Usually infections take from a couple of days to one week, and thereafter, the period of recovery may take about one week. However, contagions are necessary for the development of the capacity of resistance. For example, infections of respiratory passages can be caused by more than hundred viruses. In an ideal case, the child has a disease with only few symptoms, or without any symptoms. More unlucky are the children who happen to catch all infections with their symptoms and finish to cope with so called infectious cycle.

Pathogens are usually transmitted from a sick person to a healthy one by respiratory ways, but also stools or excretions from an infected area e.g. sputum or nasal excretions may spread pathogens. Usually that is done by hand contact. Most pathogens causing infectious diseases are transmitted from one person to another only in a very close contact. The place where children are in day care has importance when we consider the fact how often children get infectious diseases. The frequency of infections is the lowest with children staying in day care at their own home, clearly higher with children in family-like nursery and the highest with children coming to day care centers. The transmissibility of many infections is high already before the actual symptoms appear. For that reason, for example in a day care group, there are many infection bearers already when the first case of disease with actual symptoms is noticed.

Children's absences from day care for reasons of infections

Generally, it is not possible to avoid the spreading of infections by preventing sick children from coming to day care. Usually, there are in a children's group simultaneously children without any symptoms, children bearing infections, and children with actual symptoms as well as children recovering from an infection. However, from a sick child's point of view it is important that the child can stay at home when sick and recover until being able to participate again in normal day care activities. Duration of recovery varies individually, and thus, it is not possible to give any general recommendations concerning it. The period of recovery has always to be considered according to each individual child.

If the child becomes sick in the middle of the day in the day care, it is relevant to inform the parents about the child's sickness and agree on their coming to pick her/him up. In that case, the parents can get a certificate of their child's sickness from the day care center, if required. The parents can also get a certificate of their child's sickness for their employer from the nurse of their child health center if the consultation by a doctor is not necessary.

In a daycare center, a child can be given only medicines that have been prescribed by a doctor and kept in their original packages.

ABOUT PREVENTION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN DAY CARE

It is possible to prevent infections from spreading in day care by some simple measures. The most important ones can be found in the following tables. These measures have to be observed in consideration of the age and the group of the child.

Distribution of food

- One adult will carry out the distribution: she/he does not participate in children's care at the same time
- Children can participate in taking away dirty dishes

Tooth brushing

- Xylitol chewing gum will be used in day care
- In a shift day care center tooth brushing will be carried out under the supervision of an adult

Child's going to toilet

- Help the child to wash her/his hands; the pot will be emptied into the toilet pan
- The pot will be rinsed only in the basin reserved for that aim; to finish, washing and/or disinfection of your own hands

Diaper changing

- Diapers will be changed in their own separate place. The base of the place for changing must stand humid cleaning. Diapers will be changed on a disposable paper sheet
- Diapers will be wrapped in plastic bags, and the base of the place for changing will be wiped with a general cleaner

Cleaning off excretions

- Excretions (vomit, stools, blood, urine, etc.) will be immediately cleaned with a chlorine-containing cleaner

Daily cleaning

- Contact surfaces of toilets and basins; hard toys, soft toys will be put aside to dry
- Door handles and other contact surfaces, etc. of the day care center
- Floors, low-placed shelves, door handles, all surfaces that the diaper-aged children have touched
- Cleaning will be carried out with a neutral and slightly alkaline cleaner
- Check that all children have their personal bedclothes



Instructions for washing hands in day care centers

Personnel

Wash your hands with water and soap

- when your hands are visibly dirty
- before cooking and between different work activities
- after going to the toilet
- after having changed a diaper
- when you come home

Disinfection of hands with a hand disinfectant

- when you come to the day care center
- before distributing food and eating
- after going to the toilet and after having assisted children in the toilet
- after having changed a diaper
- after having wiped a child's nose
- after smoking
- after having cleaned off excretions
- when you have no possibility to wash your hands
- to replace hand-washing with water and soap when the hands are not visibly dirty

Disposable protection gloves

- during epidemics of vomits and diarrhea when you wash a child's behind or clean vomit, diarrhea and blood excretions

Children

Washing hands with water and soap

- when the child arrives to the day care centre
- before a meal
- after going to the toilet
- after the change of a diaper
- when the hands have become dirty
- before leaving the day care center
- when the child comes home

Disinfection of the hands with a hand disinfectant

- only during epidemics of vomit, diarrhea or something similar after hand-washing
- the personnel always doses the hand disinfectant into children's hands, by means of a pump-bottle, for example

Hand-washing and disinfection techniques

- to insure good results in hand hygiene, it is recommended that the personnel would not wear rings or other hand jewelry during work shifts

Hand-washing

- hands have to be rinsed with water before dosing liquid soap
- hands have to be washed all over, particularly the fingertips, between the fingers, thumbs and wrists
- soap residue has to be carefully rinsed off the hands under running water
- the hands have to be dried with a disposable paper towel
- the water tub has to be switched off with the paper towel that you used
- children will be taught hand-washing and assisted in it

Disinfection of the hands

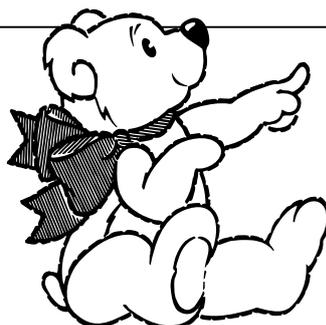
- hand disinfectant must be dosed sufficiently for the hands, at least two presses from the dosing bottle
- hand disinfectant has to be spread on dry hands
- disinfectant has to be rubbed on the hands, particularly on fingertips, between the fingers, thumbs and wrists so long that the hands become dry
- concerning children, the dosing of hand disinfectant will be comprised of a small drop which is sufficient to disinfect small hands
- children will be taught hand-washing and assisted in it

Washing hands is also important at home. It is recommended to wash and dry the child's hands when the child comes home from daycare, and before eating and after going to the toilet.



In the table below you will find the most common infections among children and minimum periods of absence due to the contagiousness of infectious diseases

Fever	The child must not be taken to day care, if the temperature, in case of a child less than 1-year old, measured in the anus, is over 38 °C, or if it is, in case of an older child, over 37.5 °C. Recovery is in good progress when the child has been without fever for 24 hours.
Coughing and cold	They do not prevent the child from coming to day care providing that the child does not have any other symptoms of an infectious disease, which may disturb general wellbeing and day care activities.
Flu, influenza	The child can be taken to the day care place once the general state of health and fever allow it.
Diarrhea and vomiting	<p>The child is kept at home until the symptoms are over.</p> <p>If salmonella has been found in the stools of a child with symptoms, the child has to stay away from day care for the duration of the symptoms, and thereafter, for two days without any symptoms.</p> <p>Enterohaemorrhagic E. coli (EHEC) requires isolation until two negative stools specimens have been obtained in 24 and 48 hours intervals</p> <p>The diaper-aged sisters and brothers of the children with EHEC contagion who have no symptoms, will be kept away from the day care place until 1 negative stools specimen has been obtained after the index case has been found negative.</p>
Exanthem subitum	Care will be organized according to the requirements of the symptoms The child can come back to the daycare place once the general state of health and temperature of the child allow it.
Erythema infectiosum	When the rash erupts, contagiousness is already over. Absence depends on the general state of health.
Enteroinfection	Absence depends on the general state of health.



Chicken pox	The recommended isolation period is 5 days from the eruption of the rash. It is not necessary to wait for the drying of the scabs.
Whooping cough	The child comes back to day care or school once the contagion period (3 weeks) is over and coughing is so slight that it does not harm the general state of health or teaching or other daycare activities. When treated with Makrolid (roxitromysin, atsitromysin) the child can come back to day care 5 days after having started medicinal treatment.
Scarlet fever and angin	The child has to be isolated for 24 hours after the start of medicinal treatment; the duration of treatment at home will depend on the general state of health.
Ear infection	No specific measures are required. The child can come back to day care once the general state of health and temperature allow it.
Impetigo	Isolation takes 24 hours after the start of oral medication and 48 hours after local anti-microbe medication.
Molluscum (Hollow warts)	Caused by a virus; the child can stay in daycare.
Conjunctivitis (eye infection)	Since the pathogens are the same viruses and bacteria as in case of infections of respiratory ways, it is not necessary to take the child away from day care for reasons of contagion risk.
Human pinworms	Measures of isolation are not required. Medicinal treatment is given at home, and preferably to the whole family at the same time.
Scabies and lice	Isolation is necessary until the treatment.



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