



ACTIVITY: STARTING A "STAY HEALTHY" KIT

Purpose: The purpose of the activity is to educate individuals and families on how to stay healthy.

Objectives:

- Explain how to keep medicines, first aid supplies, prescriptions, and medical records ready and accessible.
- Describe ways to avoid contracting or spreading diseases.
- Identify where to get first aid and CPR training.

Preparation and Needed Materials: Prior to conducting this activity, you may want to:

- Assemble a model kit of medicines, first aid supplies, and records as described in the participant handout.
- Work with local merchants to get donations of items such as hand sanitizer, simple first aid supplies, or pill-a-day containers to include in the kits.
- Have information available on first aid and CPR training in the local area.

Presentation Tips:

- Welcome participants to the session. Explain that by the end of the session, they will be able to assemble a family medical kit from items found in their homes and understand how to avoid contracting or spreading diseases.
- Ask the participants the following discussion question: When a disaster happens, how do you plan to stay healthy if medical help is unavailable?
- Acknowledge the answers and then present the following key points:
 - In an emergency or natural disaster, first responders and health care providers may be overwhelmed just trying to respond to the event. Or, if transportation is cut off, neither they nor you may be able to reach hospitals and clinics.
 - That's why it's important to keep medical supplies, records, and prescriptions on hand and to know how to do simple first aid and CPR.



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Presentation Tips: (Continued)

- Also, in a natural disaster or severe weather, contagious diseases can spread, particularly if basic services like water are out. So be ready and take simple preventive measures to avoid getting or spreading diseases.
- Distribute the "Stay Healthy" Kit handout. Briefly review the items listed. Ask the participants if there are additional items that they would include in their family kits or information sheets. Show examples using the kit you assembled. Briefly review the preventive measures listed on the handout.
- Optional Germ Busters Activities:
 - Explain that there are simple steps that individuals and households can take to prevent the spread of germs such as the flu and common cold.
 - Distribute the Germ Busters Activities handout.
 - Demonstrate the activities described on the handout.
- Conclude the session by explaining how people can receive training in simple first aid and CPR. Direct participants to more information.
- Thank the participants for attending the session.



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In an emergency or natural disaster, first responders and health care providers may be overwhelmed just trying to respond to the event. Transportation may be cut off, keeping you or health care providers from reaching hospitals and clinics. Phone lines may be down, or you may have to evacuate your neighborhood with little notice. For all of those reasons, it's important to keep medical supplies, records, and prescriptions on hand and to know how to do simple first aid and CPR.

Also, in a natural disaster or severe weather, contagious diseases can spread, particularly if basic services like water are out. Fortunately, simple preventive measures can help you avoid getting or spreading diseases.

□ "Stay Healthy" Kit

- Put a week's supply of medicines in a plastic bag and label it with the family member's name. Include any needed testing equipment (such as a glucose meter or test strips). (Tip: If you take multiple medications every day, you may want to prepare a pill-a-day container for the week. Note: Talk to your medical provider about getting refills in advance.)
- Also include denture supplies, extra eyeglasses, contact lenses, hearing aids, and related supplies.
- Include a list of prescription medicines, copies of medical insurance, Medicare/Medicaid cards, and a list of medical conditions, known allergies, etc. (See next pages.)
- Place tags on specialized equipment (oxygen, feeding pumps, etc.) with operating instructions so that someone unfamiliar with the items can provide help.
- Include first aid supplies (bandages, cotton washcloths, cleaning agent/soap, hydrogen peroxide/isopropyl alcohol, antiseptic cream, and aspirin or an aspirin substitute).
- Pack all the items in plastic bags or a container to keep them as dry and airtight as possible, and store in an easy-to-find location.

Tip: If your medicine needs refrigeration and the power goes out, most medicines can be kept in a closed refrigerator for several hours without a problem. If you're unsure, contact your physician or pharmacist.



□ Preventive Measures

- Make sure everyone in the household is up to date on required vaccinations.
- Clean contaminated surfaces. A recent study found a strain of the flu virus was present on 60% of common household items in homes with just one sick child.
- If possible, avoid crowded places when diseases are going around.
- Ask household members to cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when they cough or sneeze. Throw tissues away after use. If tissues are unavailable, sneeze or cough into the crook of the arm.
- Wash hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. If water is unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. If individuals are sensitive to the odor, try getting unscented wipes. Want to know how long to wash your hands? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song all the way through twice while washing.
- Avoid touching eyes, noses, and mouths. Germs spread this way.



Household Health Information Sheet

If there is a medical or other emergency, a list of health information will be important. Fill in information for each household member in the space provided. Make copies for your home, your car(s), children's school(s), and your place(s) of work.

1. Household Member Information

Household Member	Allergies/Medical Conditions	Medications	Dosage



Household Health Information Sheet

2. Emergency Contacts (You may want to program these contacts into your cell phone directory!)

Contact	Name & Phone Number
Local personal emergency contact	
Out-of-town personal emergency contact	
Hospital near home	
Hospital near work	
Hospital near school(s)	
Physician(s)	
Specialist(s) (including counselors)	
Local public health office	
Pharmacy	
Employer(s) contact and emergency information	
School(s) contact and emergency information	
Veterinarian	



What's a Germ?

Germs are very small living things that can cause people to get sick. Germs can cause you to get a stomach ache or make you sneeze. They are so small that you can't see them unless you use a high-powered microscope.

Where Do Germs Live?

Germs can live on many common objects, and we spread them around by what we touch. Let's see how far germs can travel.

1. Rub a thin coating of cooking oil or petroleum jelly on one family member's hands.
2. Next, sprinkle glitter, nutmeg, or cinnamon on the hands. Be sure to tell your kids not to touch their noses or eyes while the pretend germs are on their hands. Explain that this individual now has pretend germs.
3. Tell the family to continue their activities for the next 10 minutes. As an alternative, you can play cards, catch, or a board game.
4. At the end of the time, ask the family to find all the places where the germs spread.
5. Demonstrate how to clean these areas and objects that now have the germs.

Wash Away Germs!

1. If you did not do the above activity, sprinkle glitter, nutmeg, or cinnamon on your children's hands. Be sure to tell them not to touch their noses or eyes while the pretend germs are on their hands.
2. Have the children wash their hands **without soap**. The "germs" won't come off.
3. Next, add soap—and watch those "germs" disappear. **Tell the children they now have learned to be an official germ buster!**
4. While they're washing:
 - Teach your children to wash their hands frequently.
 - Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds—the time it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice.
 - Remind your children to wash their hands at school, too.
5. Consider creating a handwashing chart to track each time your child washes his or her hands. Provide a reward once the goal is met.



Germes in Flight

1. Explain that when you sneeze or cough, germs can also travel through the air like tiny, invisible flying objects.
2. Hold up a spray bottle with water in it. Spray the water above your family members. Ask who felt the water.
3. Explain that spraying the water shows how germs can be spread by a sneeze or cough.
4. Demonstrate how to use tissues or your elbow to cover a sneeze or cough. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue every time you cough or sneeze. Throw the used tissue in a wastebasket. If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve. You can learn more at the following Web address: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm>

Graphics from the "Cover Your Cough" flyers and posters are property of the Minnesota Department of Health.

