

General Hygiene

Hand Washing



Following the transplant, you should wash your hands frequently during the day as hand contact is by far the most common way of contracting infections. Many bacteria and viruses are transmitted by touching telephones, doorknobs, or other objects and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes. Frequent hand washing is the best protection against infection and should be done regularly before eating meals, taking medications and after using the toilet.

Everyone who meets you should wash their hands frequently.

Personal Hygiene

After the transplant, personal hygiene is very important. Make sure to shower daily, using soap. Often, your skin post-transplant will be dry and sensitive, always applying a lotion to all your skin after you shower. Towels and clothing should be changed daily.

Contact with People

To restrict exposure to infection, it is recommended that you restrict touching or hugging to a few special people with whom you have frequent contact. It is also important to avoid settings in which you are likely to meet sick people. This will mean avoiding crowded spaces such as shopping malls, mosques and large gatherings of people. Since the transplant can destroy previous immunity to disease, it is also important to avoid contact with babies or adults that have been vaccinated with live viruses such as polio within the last 30 days.

If someone living with you gets sick, he or she will be advised to move temporarily until they are no longer infectious. If that is not possible, arrange to have the person stay away from you as much as possible. If you are not sure, always ask the BMT Staff or your physician.

Hygiene in Your Home



Your house post-transplant should be kept clean. The house should be cleaned daily. The bathroom and eating area should be cleaned most often, and dirty sponges should be replaced weekly. Using a cleaner with antibacterial disinfectants such as Clorox or Dettol is recommended. Using damp cloth to clean dust is more effective. Avoid sitting on the floor or ground, you should always sit on a chair or clean rug. Do not share your prayer mat with other people.

Plants

Avoid keeping fresh plants and flowers in your home as the organisms that grow in dirt, water and plants can cause infections. In general, you should avoid handling plants in the first few months following the transplant and refrain from gardening or sitting on grass, or sand.

Acknowledgements

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National Marrow donor Program (NMDP)
World Marrow Donor Association (WMDA)
European Bone Marrow Transplant (EBMT) textbook for nurses