



# Catholic School Health Newsletter

for Parents and Families

ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

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## Wash Your Hands to Help Prevent Spread of Illness!

Handwashing is one of the simplest, most effective ways that everyone can help prevent the spread of illness!

### Always wash your hands:

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage

### The proper steps to handwashing are:

- Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song twice or pray the "Hail Mary" twice.
- Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
- Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

The School Nurse Partnership is a collaboration with SSM Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital and the Catholic Education Office of the Archdiocese of St. Louis.



## FEBRUARY IS DENTAL HEALTH MONTH . . .



The focus of National Dental Hygiene Month is on the key daily habits that promote healthy teeth and gums.

**Brushing.** The ADHA recommends using a soft toothbrush to brush twice a day, once in the morning after breakfast and then again in the evening just before going to bed, using a toothpaste containing fluoride.

**Flossing.** This should be done once daily, optimally just before going to sleep, when trapped food particles can do the most damage.

**Rinse** - Use an antimicrobial mouthwash. This should be done with daily brushing.

**Chew** sugar-free gum. Research supported by the Wrigley Oral Healthcare Programs has shown that chewing sugar-free gum for 20 minutes after eating helps to clean debris from teeth, promotes saliva production which helps to control acid buildup, and adds necessary minerals to the enamel of the teeth

**Eat** healthy. A diet in accordance with the government's food pyramid promotes oral health by cutting down on sugars and contributing to overall physical health, and includes whole-grains and dairy products, vegetables, fruits, and nuts, with meat, fish, and sweets in moderation.

Additionally, parents should check their children's teeth closely once per month looking for signs of decay or infection, including cavities and white spots on the gums. They should make sure their children see their dentist for a checkup regularly.

Reference - <http://www.adha.org/daily4>

## . . . AND HEART HEALTH MONTH!

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States. It is also one of the most preventable. Making heart-healthy choices, knowing your family health history and the risk factors for heart disease, having regular check-ups and working with your physician to manage your health are all integral aspects of saving lives from this often silent killer.

The things that you do to keep your heart healthy will also make you less likely to develop many other types of diseases, like type 2 diabetes and cancer. These small steps are not expensive or difficult to take, and taking them can go a long way toward helping you feel your best.

**Find out if your heart is healthy** by using [Life's Simple 7™](#): 1) Avoid smoking and using tobacco products; 2) Be physically active every day; 3) Eat a heart-healthy diet; 4) Keep a healthy weight; 5) Keep your blood pressure healthy; 6) Keep your total cholesterol healthy; and 7) Keep your blood sugar healthy.

Reference- [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)

## LEARN THE TERMS: COLD vs FLU

The common cold and the flu are both respiratory illnesses but they are caused by different viruses. Both the cold and flu symptoms can be treated with over-the-counter medications such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Call your physician if you have any questions or concerns about any symptoms!

### COLD



- Symptoms include sneezing, runny nose or stuffy nose
- Symptoms usually are more mild than the flu
- Symptoms come on gradually
- Is characterized as having no fever or a low-grade fever
- Is highly contagious

### FLU (INFLUENZA)



- Symptoms include body aches, extreme fatigue and dry cough
- Symptoms usually are more severe than a cold
- Symptoms come on faster than the cold
- Is characterized as having 100 degree or higher fever
- Is highly contagious

### STOMACH FLU



- Cramps in your belly or sides
- Stomach pain
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

You may also have a fever, headache, and swollen lymph glands, depending on the type of germ that causes it.

Stomach viruses spread fast because people don't wash their hands well after using the bathroom or changing a baby's diaper. Wash long enough to sing "Happy Birthday" twice or pray the "Hail Mary" twice. Many doctors call stomach flu "a family affair" because it's so highly contagious it can affect every member of a family.

## TIPS FOR KEEPING KIDS ACTIVE DURING THE WINTER MONTHS

- If you belong to the YMCA or another fitness club, be sure to take advantage of walking trails, swimming and playing basketball/shooting hoops, etc.
- Use music for dancing plus stepping, hopping, jumping in place.
- Use Wii Fit.
- Have kids make up dances or share the latest popular or line dances.
- Play 'keep the balloon up.'
- Hula hoops help strengthen core muscles
- You don't need a backyard to play a game of soccer.
- Try juggling, top spinning, or yo-yo contests.
- Play "Sport mimics" by acting out sport movements such as batting, kicking, dribbling, throwing/catching, dunking, swimming various strokes, and volleyball passing/serving.
- Make paper airplanes and see how far they can fly-but be sure they don't point them at other people!
- Bundle up and get kids back outside as soon as the weather permits - even it's only for a 15-minute walk

