



South Central Public Health District

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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(208) 737-5900

PLAGUE HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

In the event of an intentional release of the bacteria (germs) that causes plague, many people may require hospitalization within a few days. Hospitals may become overcrowded and it may become necessary for many sick people to be cared for in their home by relatives or friends. The following information may be helpful in providing care to sick persons at home.

- Listen closely to the local radio or television for special instructions.
- Advise friends and relatives not to visit until the sick person is feeling better.
- Wash your hands with soap and water before you eat or drink, after using the bathroom, and after contact with the sick person.
- Wear gloves (vinyl or latex) when you have contact with the sick person's blood and other body fluids (urine, feces, vomit, wound drainage, mucous, or saliva). Wash your hands after removing the gloves. If gloves are not available, wrap your hands in plastic bags and secure with a rubber band. Discard the bags after each use and wash your hands with soap and water.
- Wash the sick person's hands after they use the bathroom, before they eat or drink, and after contact with pets.
- If an antibiotic is recommended, give it exactly as prescribed. If an allergic reaction occurs, get medical help immediately.
- Take the person's temperature at least twice a day. If their temperature goes above 100.4° F, give Tylenol (if not allergic) or other medicine such as Motrin or Advil. Follow directions on the package insert. If their temperature is not controlled by the medicine, call your health care provider or take the person to the nearest designated emergency center or hospital.
- If the person is having trouble breathing, go immediately to the nearest designated emergency center or hospital.
- Give the person plenty of fluids such as water or juice. Allow the person to eat solid food as tolerated.
- Change the sick person's clothes and bed linens frequently, especially if soiled with blood or body fluids.
- Wash soiled clothes and bed linens in warm water using any commercial laundry product.
- Disinfect the bathroom and kitchen with a disinfectant such as Lysol every day or when surfaces become soiled with blood or other body fluids.
- As the caregiver, you must take care of yourself. Get plenty of rest, drink fluids frequently, and eat a healthy diet. Even if you are not taking an antibiotic, take your temperature in the morning and afternoon for three weeks. If you develop a fever above 100.4° F or if you have shortness of breath, seek medical attention immediately.