

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KEEPING YOU AND YOUR DOG HEALTHY

- **REMEMBER!!** There is a greater chance of contracting disease from another person than from a healthy dog – don't forget to PROTECT YOURSELF from human infectious disease transmission particularly in the case of: respiratory infections, open wounds/dermatitis, gastroenteritis
- **HAND WASHING IS THE SINGLE MORE IMPORTANT MEANS OF PREVENTING DISEASE TRANSMISSION FROM ANY SOURCE**
 - Hand sanitizer is acceptable where pump soap and water are not available
 - Wash hands after contact with pets and particularly before eating
 - Wash hands after handling raw meat including raw dog food
 - If you have cuts or abrasions on your hands use gloves when handling stool or urine in addition to hand washing afterwards
- Children should be supervised at all times around dogs
 - Never allow children to play in dog toilet areas in yard
 - Teach hand washing after playing with pet or using toilet, etc
- Keep the environment clean of dog urine and stool
 - Remove and dispose of stool promptly and hygienically – use proper protection for yourself and **wash hands**
 - Train dog to a specific toilet area for easier management of clean-up
 - 1:10 bleach to water solution best overall disinfectant – Chlorox or Lysol wipes are excellent for surface cleaning
 - Do not compost dog or cat waste to use in a garden
 - Wash pet bedding frequently (at least weekly) in hottest water possible
- Keep human food areas free of contamination from dog waste/saliva/contact
 - Don't clean food bowls or cage materials in kitchen sink
- Do not encourage your dog to lick people, particularly on the face and conversely do not kiss your dog around mouth
 - Dogs can carry bacteria from a variety of sources, raw food, other animal stools, toilet bowl (where they like to get a drink!)
 - Particularly important for immunocompromised individuals
 - Consider teaching “touch” command with nose to “kiss” a person's hand rather than licking face
- **KEEP YOUR DOG HEALTHY**
 - Annual physical exam
 - Annual fecal examination – recommend BOTH direct fresh stool and flotation
 - Keep all vaccinations up to date
 - Monthly heartworm prevention with round and hookworm preventive included - consider using year round
 - Monthly flea and tick control during flea and tick season
 - Prompt attention to abnormal behavior/disease – be a good observer
 - Avoid contact with dogs of unknown health status
 - **NOTE:** In some areas, dogs visiting hospitals may be required to have more frequent stool checks and physical examinations along with periodic fecal cultures and nasal cultures for a variety of pathogens – please follow their specific recommendations

THERAPY DOG FACILITY VISIT CONSIDERATIONS

- Wash any towels or blankets that are to be used – do not use the same materials from one facility to the next without washing (have duplicates)
- **DO NOT** feed dog regular meal for a minimum of 2 hours before visit
 - Feeding immediately before visit increases chances of need to defecate and increases potential bacterial populations in mouth for a temporary period
 - Consider wiping down dog's muzzle area with a sanitizing wipe prior to therapy visit – avoid eye area as these are alcohol-based
- Brush the dog's teeth if possible shortly before visit – removes food particles which reduces bacterial contamination and odor – should be done daily anyway!
- Inspect dog closely for any external parasites, hair loss or skin lesions
- Make sure coat is clean particularly around hindquarters and face
 - Bathing more than once a week can be detrimental to the skin and hair coat
 - Preferred bathing schedule is every 2 to 4 weeks but some facilities may require weekly
 - Spot bathing is preferred for dog skin health if needed more than weekly
 - Routine brushing and the use of “bath wipes” on the surface if needed
 - Some facilities may require dogs wear T-shirts to cut down on shedding
 - **DO NOT** walk dog in any area where contact with poison oak, ivy or sumac is a potential prior to a visit
- If dog is small enough to sit on a lap or a bed, or will be putting paws on people – make sure feet are clean and nails are trimmed and filed if necessary
 - Train dog to allow foot washing in a shallow pan prior to visit
 - Small dogs can have feet wiped with sanitizing wipe prior to visit
 - Use a clean towel or blanket on lap or bed before placing dog
 - If facility requires new towel for each person, consider a disposable material that is left in the patient's room – check with hospital for requirements
- **DO NOT** visit if the dog has shown signs of illness in the previous 24 hours, even if he/she is normal now – dog should be normal for 48 hrs before resuming visits
 - Particular concern are GI signs, open, moist or crusty skin lesions, sudden hair loss and respiratory infections
- **DO NOT** apply flea/tick topical medication, nor use flea/tick spray nor give a bath containing insecticides on the day of the visit – wait at least 24 hours after application
- Bring appropriate materials for cleaning up any stool, urine or saliva
 - Disposable Chlorox or Lysol wipes are great for disinfecting surfaces (NOT CLOTHES or dog) after cleanup
- Bring a bottle of hand sanitizer or individual hand wipes
 - Use this on your hands before and after your visit to protect YOU
 - Offer it to residents who may have handled dog (Please check with facility administrators/teachers/or other responsible individuals before doing this)
 - Use it to sanitize dog's muzzle or feet as needed
- **DO NOT** visit patients that are immunocompromised; post-surgical, open wounds, infectious disease, pregnant individuals, infants, etc
 - RESPECT “no entry” or “STOP” signs indicating no entry into room