**Practice Hand Hygiene**

Caregivers should always wash their hands before providing care. Afterward, wash again and apply alcohol-based hand sanitizer as well. Follow these steps for proper hand hygiene:

1. Wet hands with warm, running water and apply liquid soap.
2. Rub hands vigorously for at least 15 seconds, covering all surfaces and fingers.
3. Scrub nails by rubbing them against the palms of your hands.
4. Rinse your hands with water.
5. Dry your hands thoroughly with a paper towel and use it to turn off the faucet. A shared towel will spread germs.
6. Apply alcohol-based hand sanitizer and rub it in well.

**Recognize Pandemic Flu Symptoms**

Watch for these symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Muscle pain

Call your health-care professional at the first sign of the flu. Many symptoms can be treated by the health-care professional over the telephone.

**Care for a Loved One with the Flu**

A person recovering from flu should have:

- Rest and plenty of liquids
- No alcohol or tobacco
- Medications to relieve flu symptoms

In some cases, a health-care professional may prescribe antiviral drugs to treat the flu. Antibiotics (like penicillin) don’t cure it.

**Monitor Pandemic Flu Symptoms**

Keep a care log. Write down the date, time, fever, symptoms, medicines given and dosage. Make a new entry at least every 4 hours or when the symptoms change. Call your health-care professional again if your loved one has:

- A high fever
  - Children and Adults: Greater than 105°F (40.5°C)
  - Babies 3- to 24-months-old: 103°F (39.4°C) or higher
  - Babies up to 3 months: Rectal temperature of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher.
- Shaking chills
- Coughing that produces thick mucus
- Dehydration (feeling of dry mouth or excessive thirst)
- Worsening of an existing serious medical condition (for example: heart or lung disease, diabetes, HIV, cancer)

Call 9-1-1 or local emergency number for any of the signs below, if you cannot reach your health-care professional:

- Irritability and/or confusion
- Difficulty breathing or chest pain with each breath
- Bluish skin
- Stiff neck
- Inability to move an arm or leg
- First-time seizure

**Reduce Fever**

To help reduce a fever, do the following:

- Give plenty of fluids.
- Give fever-reducing medication, such as acetaminophen, aspirin or ibuprofen, as directed on the container’s label.
- Do not give aspirin to anyone younger than 20.
- Keep a record of your loved one’s temperature in your care log.
- To relieve discomfort, give a sponge bath with lukewarm water.

After you have called your doctor or emergency number for a fever, continue to follow the home treatment recommendations above. If there is a delay in getting help, ask a health-care professional if you should start an additional fever-reducing medication (acetaminophen, ibuprofen or aspirin) between the doses described on the label. Always continue to give plenty of fluids.

**Prevent Dehydration**

Dehydration occurs when the body loses too much water and it’s not replaced quickly enough. It can be serious. Begin giving soothing drinks at the first sign of the flu and follow these tips:

- In addition to plenty of liquids, give ice and light, easily digested foods, such as soup and broth.
- If your loved one has diarrhea or vomiting, give fluids that contain electrolytes. These are available at your pharmacy or grocery store. Or you can make your own rehydration electrolyte drink for someone over the age of 12.
- If drinking liquids makes nausea worse, give one sip at a time until your loved one can drink again.

**Electrolyte Drink**

- 1 quart water
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. table salt
- 3 to 4 tbsp. sugar
- ½ tsp. salt substitute

Mix well and flavor with lemon