

# Child Care Centers

# **FIGHT BAC!**



**CLEAN**  
Wash hands and surfaces often.

**SEPARATE**  
Don't cross-contaminate.

**CHILL**  
Refrigerate promptly.

**COOK**  
Cook to proper temperatures.

## Keep Food Safe From Bacteria™

For More Food Safety Information, Visit our Website:  
<http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov>



# Meet BAC, the

# Ugly Little Germ

That Could Make You Sick.



Adapted From:  
Food Safety at Home, School and When Eating Out  
USDA/Food Safety and Inspection Service  
ACF/The Chef and the Child Foundation  
FDA/Center for Food Safety & Applied Nutrition



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Wash your hands well  
with soap and warm water.



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## Read to your kids to Fight BAC!™

### "JUST LOOK AT THOSE HANDS"

You've heard it over and over again: "Just look at those hands! Wash them!" Sure. You get tired of hearing it. And you are probably tired of washing up so often. But if you knew — and if grown-ups knew — exactly why it's so important, handwashing would be "number one" on everyone's list of things to do.

You say you washed your hands this morning after you woke up? That's good. But now it's lunchtime. You mean you haven't washed your hands again? Once a day just isn't good enough — not if you want to keep harmful bacteria and other germs away!



We all know human hands are wonderful things. They can clap and snap. They can hold a napping cat or stir soup in a vat. But busy hands can also pick up dirt and germs. And these sneaky varmints love to play hide-and-seek.

Just look at your hands. See the lines, cracks, and wrinkles where dirt and germs hide. You can see even tinier nooks and crannies if you use a magnifying glass. It looks almost like a sponge, doesn't it? While you're looking, you may also see some dirt. But no matter how hard you look, you won't see any germs. That's because they are tiny creatures (micro-organisms) that can only be seen through a microscope.

Where do germs come from? They live everywhere. In fact, billions of them grow and live on your body every day. Their favorite hangouts are your hair, under your fingernails, and in the small folds of your skin.

Most of these germs won't hurt you. In fact, you can't even get rid of many of them, no matter how hard you try. But germs also come from the world around

you, and some of these *can* hurt you. They can make you sick. Luckily, these are the sort you can do something about.

Do you know where your last cold came from? Scientists believe most people get colds and other illnesses by touching a sick person or by touching something a sick person touched. That doesn't mean you shouldn't touch other people or things. And it doesn't mean you have to wear gloves.



All you have to do is wash your hands. Handwashing can also help you keep food safe. Let's say you're making lunch for your friends. If your dirty hands touch the food, germs could spread, grow, and cause food poisoning.

So next time, don't just look at those hands — wash them! Follow these handwashing tips:

**Wash Your Hands Often.** After you go to the bathroom. If you touch a cut or sore. And always *before* you touch food. Also, wash your hands after you touch raw meat or poultry. They may carry harmful germs too.

**Lather Up With Soap and Warm Water.** The suds scrub dirt and germs away.

**Don't Leave Anything Out.** Wash your hands front and back and between the fingers. Soap up your wrists too. And don't forget your fingernails. A good nail brush does the best job there.



**Rinse Well in Warm Water.** Those pesky germs will go down the drain!



## In Your Child Care Center

### CLEAN

Wash hands after using the bathroom, changing diapers, or handling pets.

Wash utensils and surfaces in hot, soapy water before and after food preparation.

Using a sanitizer or a mixture of bleach and water on surfaces can provide some added protection against bacteria.

Cutting boards should be run through the dishwasher or washed in hot, soapy water after each use.

### SEPARATE

Use one cutting board for fresh fruits and vegetables.

Use a separate cutting board for raw meat, poultry, and seafood.

To prevent juices from raw meat, poultry, or seafood from dripping onto other foods in the refrigerator, place these raw foods in sealed containers or plastic bags. Place on trays on the lowest shelf in the refrigerator.

Never place cooked food on the same plate or cutting board that previously held raw food.

### CHILL

Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared foods, and leftovers within 4 hours or less. Marinate food in the refrigerator.

Never defrost food at room temperature. Thaw food in the refrigerator, in cold water, or in the microwave.

Separate leftovers into shallow containers for quicker cooling in the refrigerator.

Don't over-stuff the refrigerator. Cold air must circulate to keep food safe.

### COOK



"IT'S SAFE TO BITE WHEN THE TEMPERATURE IS RIGHT!"

Keep hot foods at 140 °F or higher.

Bring sauces, soups, and gravies to a rolling boil when reheating.

Use a clean food thermometer to make sure meat, poultry, egg dishes, casseroles, and other foods are cooked to the safe internal temperature.



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