



## *Information for You from Your Health Care Team*

### **Back to Basics**

Good personal hygiene can make you healthier and less likely to get sick. It also helps you to look good and feel good. Read this handout to be sure you are covering the basics of personal care. Talk with your nurse if you have questions specific about your needs.

#### **Wash Your Hands Often**

- Handwashing is the best way to prevent infections and the spread of diseases.
- Always wash your hands before you eat, before you handle food, and after you use the toilet.
- Wash your hands often if you are sick or around people who are sick.
- Use a lot of soap and water to work up a good lather.



#### **Keep Your Body Clean and Healthy**

- Take a shower or tub bath at least two to three times a week.
- Use soap and water. Rinse well. Dry completely.
- Shampoo your hair every time you bathe.
- Clean your genitals and armpits every day.
- Keep feet clean and dry. Wear clean socks. Don't walk barefoot outside.
- Use body lotion to keep skin soft.
- Women should always wipe from front to back after using the toilet.



#### **Take Care of Your Teeth**

- Brush your teeth after every morning and night. Try to brush after every meal.
- Floss between each tooth every day.
- See your dentist at least every 6 months.



#### **Take Care of Your Nails**

- Clean underneath nails every day.
- Keep fingernails short. They should be cut to be just longer than your fingertips.
- Cut toenails straight across, just longer than your toe.
- If you are unable to care for your nails, ask for help.
- If you have diabetes or decreased blood flow to your legs, ask your health care provider about proper care.



**Speak up if you have any questions or concerns.**