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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

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### **Stay Healthy and Stop the Spread of Infections**

Bismarck, N.D.— The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) is raising awareness about preventing infections to support International Infection Prevention week October 14-20, 2018. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hand washing can prevent one in five diarrhea-related sicknesses and one in five respiratory infections.

“Handwashing is the easiest and best way to prevent germs from entering your body and making you sick while you’re at home, at school, at work, at the gym, on vacation, out and about in the community or when hospitalized,” said Faye Salzer, infection control coordinator with the NDDoH. “Wash your hands when coming home from public places, before cooking, before eating, after sneezing, blowing your nose, coughing and after using the bathroom. Carry alcohol-based hand sanitizer with you when you aren’t able to wash your hands,” said Salzer.

Other tips to stay healthy and stop the spread of infections:

- Your cell phone is 10 times dirtier than a toilet seat! Wipe your cell phone frequently with alcohol-based wipes, don’t take them into the bathroom, and don’t lay them down on germ surfaces. A lot of people let children play with their phones, so kids can pick up germs this way too.
- Avoid touching mucous membranes (your eyes, mouth, and nose) with your hands/fingers.
- Sneeze/cough into your elbow.
- Don’t share personal items. Toothbrushes, towels, razors, handkerchiefs, and nail clippers can all be sources of infectious bacteria, viruses, and fungi. Teach children that there are some types of items they should not share with others, such as juice boxes, cups, lip balm, etc.
- Do not place purses or bags on the kitchen table, kitchen counter, or anywhere else food is consumed.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as T.V. remotes, door knobs, computers, etc. on a regular basis. Establish a schedule for daily and weekly cleaning, especially the bathroom and kitchen. Clean more often when there are sick family members in your home.
- Shower with soap (not bar soap that is used by others) after sports practices or workouts. Dry off with a clean towel and change into clean clothes.
- Stay up-to-date on vaccines and stay home if you are sick.

For more information, contact Faye Salzer, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.333.8389 or visit [www.ndhealth.gov/disease/hai](http://www.ndhealth.gov/disease/hai).

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