Lesson 4

Preventing the Spread of Disease

Guide to Reading

Building Vocabulary
In your own words, write a definition of hygiene.
- hygiene (p. 418)

Focusing on the Main Ideas
In this lesson, you will be able to:
- describe how to protect yourself against pathogens.
- explain how to avoid spreading pathogens to others when you are sick.
- identify habits that can help you stay healthy.
- practice a positive health behavior to prevent the spread of disease.

Reading Strategy
Finding the Main Idea: Look at the main headings in this lesson. For each heading, write one sentence that explains the main idea.

Quick Write
Write two ways that washing your hands with soap helps keep you and others healthy.

Keeping Pathogens from Spreading

By now, you understand that you can't avoid pathogens. However, you can develop good habits to protect yourself from them. Good personal hygiene, or cleanliness, helps limit the number of pathogens you encounter. Eating foods that are good for you, getting exercise, and sleeping well all help your body fight pathogens. Keeping your environment clean keeps the number of pathogens down, too.

- Wash dishes right after use to keep pathogens from growing on plates and eating utensils. Why is it important to use warm, soapy water?
Preventing the Spread of Disease

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Protecting Yourself from Pathogens

To keep yourself from getting sick, follow these guidelines:

- Avoid close contact with people who have a communicable disease, especially if they are still contagious.
- Never share eating utensils, cups, glasses, toothbrushes, or any other personal items.
- Wash your hands thoroughly and often, especially before you prepare and eat food. Use plenty of warm, soapy water. Remember to wash your hands after you use the bathroom, play with pets, visit a sick person, or touch garbage or any other source of pathogens.
- Keep your fingers and hands away from your mouth, nose, and eyes. Don’t bite your nails.
- Handle and prepare food safely. This is especially important for meat, poultry, and fish. Wash vegetables and cook meat thoroughly.
- Wipe counters thoroughly. Use paper towels and spray disinfectants. Using sponges and cloths repeatedly can actually spread more germs than it removes.
- Empty the trash often. Keep trash cans clean.
- Keep pets clean and healthy. Clean up after your pet.

Protecting Others from Pathogens

When you’re sick, help protect the people around you. Think ahead, and take these safety measures:

- If you feel sick, tell a parent or guardian. This person can help you get the medical help you need as soon as possible. If you are sick at school, tell a teacher or the school nurse as soon as you can. Early treatment helps keep your condition from getting worse. It also limits the number of people who are exposed to whatever is making you sick.
- If you are ill, stay home from school and other public places. You don’t want to expose others to your illness. Avoid close contact with others, too. Wash your hands often.
Health Skills Activity

Practicing Healthful Behaviors

Wash Your Hands!
Every time you rub your eyes, touch your face, or cut your finger, you risk exposing your body to pathogens. One of the best ways to block pathogens from entering your body is to keep your hands clean. You may think you do a good job of this. However, if you just splash water on your hands and wipe them on a towel, you aren’t doing enough. This simple action isn’t enough to kill pathogens.

Here’s how to wash your hands the right way.

1. Wet your hands with warm water and apply soap.
2. Rub your hands together vigorously. Scrub all parts of your hands for 30 seconds or more.
3. Rinse your hands well. If you are using a public restroom, use a paper towel to turn the water off.
4. Dry your hands using a clean towel or a paper towel. If you are using a public restroom, use the paper towel you dried your hands with to open the door when you leave. (This will help you avoid getting any pathogens from the doorknob on your clean hands.)

With a Group
Without looking at a clock, pretend to wash your hands for what you think is at least 30 seconds. Have another member of the group time you. Create a graph showing how well each member of the group estimated the time.

- Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze. Turn your head away from others when you cough and sneeze, too. Use a tissue only once, and throw it away in a proper place. What if you don’t have a tissue? Sneeze or cough into the crook of your elbow rather than your hand. You’ll be less likely to spread germs to items you touch.

- If a medical professional has told you to take medicine, follow the directions on the label exactly. Take all the medicine you are supposed to take. Don’t stop taking a medicine because you feel better. If you do, it might be too soon. You could get sick again.

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Reading Check Explain When you are sick, why should you tell your parents or guardians right away?
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Health Online

Lesson 4 Review

A Healthful Lifestyle
The more healthful choices you make, the more likely that you will stay well. Here are some positive health practices that you can develop.

• Eat a balanced diet.
• Bathe or shower regularly using soap and shampoo.
• Avoid all tobacco products, alcohol, and other drugs.
• Get 8–9 hours of sleep every day.
• Rest when you are sick.
• Ask a parent or guardian to make sure that your immunizations are up to date.
• Learn to manage stress. Too much stress can weaken your immune system.
• Visit the doctor regularly for routine checkups. Follow any advice your doctor gives you.

Reading Check
Identify Name five healthful habits that can help you stay well.

After You Read
Review this lesson for new terms, major headings, and Reading Checks.

What I Learned
1. Vocabulary Define hygiene, and use the term in a sentence.
2. Describe How can staying home when you are sick help keep others healthy?
3. Identify What are three strategies for protecting yourself from pathogens?

Applying Health Skills
6. Practicing Healthful Behaviors Carlos wakes up with a scratchy throat and a stuffy nose. His friends are expecting him to play in the soccer game after school, and Carlos doesn’t want to let them down. What should Carlos do?

Health Online For more review questions for Lesson 4, go to health.glencoe.com.