



# spotlight on health

## How Hidden Germs Can Threaten Your Family's Health

(NAPSA)—Results of a new global study and survey reveal that American families could be doing more to help protect themselves and their children from dangerous germs at home.

The findings released by the Hygiene Council, as part of an effort to educate the public on the importance of hygiene, indicate that Americans' current kitchen cleaning habits are not effectively helping to safeguard their families from illness-causing germs and bacteria.

Here's a look at where the Hygiene Council found germs stacking up in the kitchen:

- According to the study, nearly half of all kitchen sinks harbor high levels of potentially dangerous bacteria. Forty-six percent of kitchen sinks—which families use for everything from bathing babies to washing raw meat—harbor unsatisfactory or heavily contaminated levels of bacteria, including *E. coli*.

- Despite 90 percent of U.S. respondents claiming to clean their kitchen surfaces at least two to three times per week, 25 percent of kitchen sinks analyzed still failed the hygiene test for having high levels of bacteria.

- The study also found a shocking 75 percent of kitchen cloths and sponges failed the hygiene test, including 25 percent of those that appeared new or visibly clean.

To help protect your family, the Hygiene Council recommends following these simple hygiene routines:

- **Surface disinfection**—Commonly touched surfaces should be regularly disinfected with products such as Lysol® Disinfectant Spray. Kitchen surfaces should



**Simple steps, such as using a disinfectant spray, can help prevent the spread of disease-causing germs in your home.**

also be cleaned and disinfected before and after preparing foods and after surfaces have been in contact with raw foods.

To reduce cross-contamination, avoid using sponges to clean surfaces as they can spread dangerous bacteria from one surface to the next.

- **Hand washing**—Wash your hands frequently after performing activities such as going to the bathroom, before and after preparing food, after touching animals and pets and especially if someone in your household is ill. Use soap and water and dry hands thoroughly.

- **Proper food handling**—To avoid food-borne illness, cook and store food at the proper temperature. Separate raw meats from fresh produce and packaged goods in your grocery bag and refrigerator. Regularly disinfect surfaces to prevent cross-contamination.

For more tips on how to help protect your family from germs at home, visit [www.hygienecouncil.com](http://www.hygienecouncil.com) or [www.cdc.gov/ounceofprevention](http://www.cdc.gov/ounceofprevention).