

Health Bulletin

Sanitize Your Way To A Healthier Cold Season

(NAPSA)—Even if you can't escape the coughing and sniffing of the cold and flu season, there are steps you can take to protect yourself and your family. Vitamins and washing your hands can be your first line of defense, but the real challenge is stopping the spread of germs once someone is sick.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 5 to 20 percent of the population gets the flu every year in the United States and the common cold virus accounts for nearly 22 million missed days of school and 20 million missed days of work.

Viruses and bacteria left on surfaces such as doorknobs, tables and desks can live for up to two hours. When a family member begins getting sick, it's important to disinfect linens and surfaces to stop the spread of the virus. But what about disinfecting pillows and stuffed animals that may be damaged in a washer? Laundry appliance manufacturers have added a sanitization cycle to their dryers to help consumers sanitize items that can't be washed or cleaned using normal methods. For example, the sanitization cycle on the Maytag Performance Series dryer is certified by NSF International to remove 99.9 percent of tested bacteria, to help consumers easily clean all items after a bout of sickness.

Stopping the spread of germs can also be accomplished by doing the following:



- Keep sick family members in one area, as cleanup is a lot easier if it isn't spread all over the house.
- Sanitize surfaces with a solution of bleach and water with a 1:10 ratio; don't forget phones, doorknobs and countertops when cleaning.
- Wear rubber gloves when handling used tissues and trash, and remove such items from the house before cleaning.
- Wash all linens in hot water, including towels and washcloths.
- Sanitize bathrooms and don't forget the flush handle on the toilet. If the toilet handle is used before hand washing, it can be one of the most contaminated areas of the house.
- Clean any dishes used by the sick person. A dishwasher is helpful but hot water and a bleach solution will do the job, too.

For more information on preventing the spread of the common cold and flu virus, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov.