



# Nursing Homes: Preventing the Spread of Germs



Nursing homes can provide a welcoming and safe environment for people to live and grow.

Unfortunately, nursing homes can be an environment where dangerous germs can live and grow too.

Each year, it is estimated that between 1 to 3 million infections occur in long-term care facilities such as nursing homes.

## Protect yourself and your loved ones by:

- Understanding how germs are spread (known as transmission) in a nursing home
- Know your nursing home's plan to prevent germ spread and ask how residents and family members can be part of the plan

## Want to prevent the spread of germs in your nursing home?

### Know the transmission trio!

*Transmission can only happen when these three elements come together.*

- **Germ:** includes bacteria, viruses, parasites, and fungi. Germs cannot be eliminated completely in nursing homes or any environment. But, the more we know about which germs are common in a nursing home, the more information we have to prevent spread.
- **People:** people who are infected and may not even know it, can infect residents and staff in a nursing home. Germ spread can happen directly through direct contact with people or indirectly through contact with something contaminated with a germ. Many residents, because of their age and other health conditions, are at high risk for infection and illness.
- **Place:** germs and people cannot be eliminated from nursing homes. Facilities must provide a safe place for residents by assessing the risk of infection in their facility, having a plan for prevention, and monitor prevention.

Want to know more? Contact your nursing home advocate or send an email to [ICARE@unthsc.edu](mailto:ICARE@unthsc.edu)

This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number UTQHP28735. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official view of the Health Resources and Services Administration or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.