



Nursing Home Communities: Common Germs and Infections



Nursing home residents are a higher risk for getting an infection resulting in serious illness.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, infections in nursing home residents resulted in over 150,000 hospitalizations each year.

Almost 150,000 nursing home residents have died from COVID-19 during the pandemic.

Protect yourself and your loved ones by:

- Knowing common germs found in nursing homes so you can ask the right questions to prevent spread
- Discussing infections in your community and the infection prevention plan
- Forming a resident and family council with the help of your community's staff and advocate (ombudsman) to address and prevent spread

Common germs that can make people sick and spread easily in nursing homes:



• **Viruses:** includes COVID-19 and flu which can cause coughing and trouble breathing and norovirus which can cause diarrhea.



• **Bacteria:** includes C diff, shigella, and salmonella that can cause fever and diarrhea. Also, TB which can lead to cough, sweating at night, and fever. Many bacteria that normally do not make us sick can get in the wrong place in our bodies and cause things like urinary tract infections (UTIs).



• **Parasites:** includes small bugs called scabies that can cause extreme itching, red spots, and wounds on your skin. Also includes small, hardy germs called crypto that can cause diarrhea.



• **Fungus:** includes c. auris that is very hardy and resistant to drug treatment causing no symptoms to fever, chills, and can get in the blood, heart, or brain leading to death.

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

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