

Infection Prevention and You



Preventing infection in adult day centers

Adult day centers provide medical, social, nutritional, and recreational services to seniors and adults with disabilities. Typically these adults have chronic health conditions, such as Alzheimer's and other related forms of dementia, as well as adults with disabilities and adults and elderly in the transitional care phase following hospital discharge. The primary aim of the adult day center is to provide care and increase interaction with others, often times engaging them in group activities. Adult day centers also provide meals, activities, socialization, and supervision.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 5,000 adult day service centers operate in the United States. Half of these centers provide skilled nursing, therapeutic, and social work services, and almost all of them provide transportation services to and from the center. Nearly 300,000 participants enroll in these centers daily.

Choosing an adult day center is very similar to choosing a child care center, and therefore it is important to consider the following:

- Overall cleanliness and accessibility of the environment.
- Observe appropriate hand washing compliance from caregivers, as well as accessibility to sinks and hand washing supplies for clientele. Caregivers should assist clientele with hand hygiene and encourage appropriate hand hygiene before and after meals and after toileting.
- Bathroom and locker room cleanliness, including sanitizing surfaces after changing soiled clothing. Note the type of disinfectants used, how the clients clothing is bagged, and if they are kept separate from other client's personal belongings.
- Observe personnel compliance with hand hygiene practice before food preparation.
- General food preparation area and serving of meals. Consider compliance with food safety rules including maintaining appropriate serving and storage for hot and cold food items.
- Immunization requirements: In addition to standard childhood vaccines, what are the facility's requirements for the flu, pneumonia, and shingles vaccine? The elderly are particularly susceptible to these diseases.
- The facility's requirement for tuberculosis screening.
- Medication storage and accessibility.
- Staff training requirements for first aid. How clientele is protected from the blood and /or body fluids of others. Gloves and other forms of personal protective equipment should be accessible and available.
- Procedure for how clientele are kept safe and protected from illness and injury. Facility policy for clientele and personnel illness.
- How shared medical devices, such as stethoscopes and thermometers, are cleaned between each client use.

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It will be helpful to visit several different centers before deciding which one is best for your family needs. Once there, allow sufficient time to watch activities, check the surroundings, and ask questions. There are many benefits to choosing a senior day center. Not only will it provide a social outlet and activities for your loved one, it can also provide respite to home caregivers allowing for opportunities to work outside the home, run errands, or just provide some needed time away. Finding a safe and healthy center provides peace of mind to the caregivers and the clients.

Additional resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—Adult Day Services Center <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/adsc.htm>

APIC Infection Prevention and You—Adult day centers <http://consumers.site.apic.org/infection-prevention-in/everywhere-else/adult-day-centers/>

APIC Infection Prevention and You—Clean your hands often <http://consumers.site.apic.org/infection-prevention-basics/wash-your-hands-often/>

APIC Consumer alert—Clean Influenza and pneumococcal immunization <http://www.apic.org/For-Consumers/Monthly-alerts-for-consumers/Article?id=influenza-and-pneumococcal-immunization>

APIC Consumer alert—Preventing foodborne illness <http://www.apic.org/For-Consumers/Monthly-alerts-for-consumers/Article?id=preventing-foodborne-illness>

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