

## Post- Earthquake Hygiene and Infant Nutrition Information

**Wash your hands:** Hand washing is the most effective way for you to control the spread of infection and care for your family's health.

- Always wash your hands:
  - \* before preparing or serving food or eating
  - \* before breast feeding or preparing infant formula
  - \* after nappy changing or toileting
  - \* when hands are obviously soiled
  - \* after blowing or wiping your nose
- Use ordinary soap with (preferably warm and running) water.
- Rub hands together with soap, under running water
- Dry hands thoroughly using towels/paper towels.
- Antiseptic hand gels are a good alternative for sanitizing hands if you don't have running water.

### Infant feeding and food safety

**Any water should be treated as contaminated until you know otherwise.** Water can be treated by boiling for two minutes or by adding 10mls of bleach per 10 litres of water.

- **Infant formula:** Make up only enough formula for each feed and use mixed formula within an hour of preparation. Discard any unfinished formula.
- If you boil sufficient water for a number of feeds – For babies less than 3 months old store the water in infant feeding bottles that have been sterilised for 5 minutes in boiling water. For babies over three months ensure feeding bottles are washed in treated drinking water before storing water or mixing formula in them.
- **Storage of breast milk:** Breast milk can be safely stored for 4 hours at room temp or 48 hours in the back of the refrigerator. If frozen breast milk has thawed due to freezer failure it is advisable to discard it unless you are sure how long it has been thawed.
- **Washing food:** Fresh food should be washed with treated water only. This includes garden produce which may have come into contact with contaminated water.
- **Any food:** That has come into contact with heavily contaminated water should be discarded.
- **Cleaning teeth:** The whole family should brush teeth with treated water only.

## Common hygiene issues

- When water is scarce and/or contaminated a “top and tail” (a wash of the face and bottom area) is an acceptable alternative to a full bath or shower. This may also prevent young children from getting water that is not safe to drink in their mouths when bathing.
- It is advisable to use either treated water or nappy wipes to clean baby’s bottom if you have any. Careful hand washing is important after changing the nappy to prevent the spread of infection.
- When in contact with potentially contaminated water keep any cuts and abrasions covered/clean to prevent infection.
- Use spa/swimming pool or treated water for washing baby clothes to help prevent the spread of infection.

## Vomiting and diarrhoea

Babies and young children can become very ill very quickly when they lose a lot of fluid through vomiting or diarrhoea. If your baby or young child develops vomiting and/or diarrhoea:

- Make sure to offer plenty of fluids – keep breastfeeding or if bottle feeding keep giving formula feeds and extra fluids.
- Offer your child food from their normal diet.
- Boiled water is the best extra fluid. Avoid fruit juices, fizzy drinks or sports drinks.
- Take your child to the doctor if vomiting or diarrhoea continues **or** if your baby or child:
  - \* has a fever
  - \* is drowsy
  - \* is having less wet nappies than usual
  - \* has a stiff neck or pain
  - \* repeatedly refuses food or fluids
  - \* has blood in their poos

Call PlunketLine 0800 933 922 to talk to a Plunket nurse about caring for your family.

Call HealthLine 0800 611 116 for information and advice about child or family illness.

For additional information go to:

[www.plunket.org.nz](http://www.plunket.org.nz)

<http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pagesmh/977>