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PREVENT ILLNESS IN SHELTERS AFTER HURRICANE IRMA



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Tallahassee, Fla.—While recovery from Hurricane Irma is underway, many people are still displaced from their homes and require housing in community shelters. It is important that individuals in shelters and shelter staff take precautions to prevent the spread of sicknesses like influenza or gastrointestinal illness.

Use of simple preventative measures by shelter residents and staff can reduce the spread of infections and infectious diseases.

The department urges everyone in a shelter to:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or hand sanitizer;
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when you cough or sneeze;
- Do not touch or shake hands with people who are sick;
- Do not share personal hygiene items like toothbrushes, combs or towels with anyone else;
- Do not share eating utensils or drinking containers with anyone else;
- Ensure that good hygiene practices are followed during food preparation; and
- Report suspected infectious illnesses to the shelter management.

Staying in a temporary shelter can be stressful, but maintaining good personal hygiene and avoiding direct contact with people who are sick can reduce the spread of illness in the environment.

For more information about good health habits that can help reduce the spread of germs, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/stopgerms.htm>

Tips for preventing respiratory illness can be found in this infographic.

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