

# KEEP THE FAMILY



# WELL

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# KEEP THE FAMILY WELL

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Keeping well is more important now than ever. We need strong, healthy bodies and minds to carry on our daily tasks. We can help by doing our best to keep from being sick or spreading illness.

"Farm people are more often victims of certain communicable diseases than their city brethren," says Dr. G. F. Mathews, Commissioner of the Oklahoma State Health Department. He points out that even though farm folk spend more time in the open air and sunlight and take more outdoor exercise, they are usually farther from the doctor when sickness strikes. Therefore, early diagnosis and treatment, so important in saving lives, are often delayed.

A comparison of the death rate in cities having a population of 10,000 or over and rural areas in Oklahoma for 1939-1940 shows that the death rate from infectious and contagious diseases is greater in the country than in towns. The following table shows the number of deaths per 100,000 residents of some of these diseases:\*

Cause of Death	Urban	Rural
Typhoid fever . . . . .	2.9	4.8
Scarlet fever . . . . .	.5	.9
Whooping cough . . . . .	1.0	2.6
Diphtheria . . . . .	1.9	4.3
Tuberculosis, all forms . . . . .	42.4	62.1
Measles . . . . .	1.0	2.6
Diarrhea and enteritis, under 2 years . . . . .	11.9	12.9

## PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

"Rural residents need to take advantage of those preventive measures and practices which will protect them from these diseases," says Dr. Mathews. He recommends the following:

First, and foremost, among such preventive measures is a safe and sanitary means of human waste disposal. The approved type septic tank or fly-proof, pit type sanitary toilet is quite satisfactory.

Safe excreta disposal together with care in the practice of personal hygiene will eliminate many of the infectious

\* Oklahoma State Health Department

diseases, such as typhoid fever, diarrhea, summer complaint, and dysentery.

A second item of importance is a safe and protected water supply. This means that the well should be so constructed that germs cannot enter it from the surface or through underground seepage, and it means that the water itself should be safe for drinking.

Other preventive measures of the utmost importance are the immunizations against smallpox, diphtheria, whooping cough, and tetanus. These should all be completed during the first year of life. Diphtheria and whooping cough are particularly destructive of life and future health in the pre-school age child.

Tetanus immunization for lockjaw is particularly important to rural persons because of the greater frequency of cuts and scratches suffered around barnyards.

Typhoid immunization is important only where sanitation fails. With a safe water and food supply, careful practice of personal hygiene, and safe excreta disposal, typhoid fever does not occur.

The following recommendations regarding immunizations and vaccinations are given by the Oklahoma State Health Department:

1. Smallpox—vaccinate at any age during an epidemic, but routinely between 3 to 13 months. Repeat at 6 and 12 years of age and during an epidemic. Re-vaccinate if necessary.

2. Pertussis (or whooping cough)—vaccinate at 8 months or any subsequent age.

3. Diphtheria—immunize against diphtheria between 9 and 18 months. Re-enforce at 6 years.

4. Tetanus for lockjaw—tetanus toxoid may be used in combination with diphtheria toxoid.

5. Typhoid—typhoid vaccine may be given at any age when needed.

Any child having been exposed to measles should receive the modifying dose of convalescent serum or immunizing globulin.

LET'S KEEP WELL

Keeping well today isn't as hard as it used to be, for so much is known about preventing illness. The following information sets forth the practices which every family member should use in order to keep well:

I. EAT RIGHT

*Get plenty of good nourishing food, but do not overeat.* Milk, butter, eggs, cheese, meat, beans and peas, fruit, green and yellow and leafy vegetables, whole-grain or enriched cereals and bread—these are the “key” foods.

*Check your diet every day*, remembering that an adequate diet aids in reducing irritability, preventing fatigue, increasing endurance and efficiency, reducing time lost from illness, preventing accidents, and speeding up production.

*Eat three meals a day*—regularly and leisurely.

II. GET PLENTY OF REST AND SLEEP

*Go to bed on time, get up on time*—regularity is important. *Relax for a short time during the day.*

*Avoid over fatigue*—The feeling of fatigue is a warning given by our body that something is needed—rest, food, drink, or a doctor's care. We should heed this warning.

A healthy body readily recovers from ordinary, normal fatigue, but excessive or prolonged fatigue is dangerous. It results in the accumulation of waste products such as lactic acid and carbonic acid which are poisonous to the body.

Fatigue may be caused from overwork, worry, infection, disease, mental and emotional upsets, poor nutrition, and improper health habits.

Lack of sufficient rest and sleep will increase the tendency to fatigue. Continued work with no rest period is usually poor economy.

Fatigue may be the result of eyestrain or some other organic trouble. Rest is the best treatment. This means complete physical and mental relaxation. If the tired feeling persists, see your family doctor.

### III. KEEP CLEAN

*Keep your body clean*—Use plenty of soap and water. Bathe often. Wash hands before meals and after going to toilet. Keep hair, hands, and fingernails clean. Brush teeth regularly. Drink lots of water. Use your own individual toilet articles, wash cloth, and towel.

*Wear clean, suitable clothes*—Fresh clean clothes suited to the type of job and to the weather contribute to good health. Wear extra clothing when going outside in cold weather. Remove wet or damp clothing or shoes promptly.

*Keep your house clean*—Unclean beds, floors, and dishes spread germs. So do flies, rats, and other household pests. Flies live in filth and can carry this filth to the food, water, and milk they contact. *So screen the house, swat the fly, cover garbage pails, treat barnyard manure, and construct a sanitary toilet* if needed. Any measure of exterminating household pests is only temporary. In order to be effective, it must be a continuing process.

*Do not spread germs*—Cover your mouth with a handkerchief or tissue when sneezing, coughing, or yawning. Do not spit on the ground, sidewalk, or floor.

### IV. KEEP FIT

*See your doctor once a year* for a check up, if possible. *Carry out his orders.* He can prevent many diseases for both children and adults. Give him a chance before you get sick.

*Be immunized and vaccinated.* Diphtheria, smallpox, typhoid fever, and lockjaw can be prevented. See page 4.

*Maintain good posture* when standing, sitting, or walking. Be temperate in all things.

*Stay at home and rest when sick.* Nausea, vomiting, headache, or a feeling of fatigue may really be the body telling you to see your doctor. Heed this warning.

### V. HAVE SOME "FUN" EACH DAY

*Work hard; play hard.* Be honest and fair. *Play with your family and neighbors.* *Keep some time for yourself;* do what you like best.

### DO AS I DO

Example is the best way to teach these health practices that will help keep the family well.

### ANOTHER TASK FOR PARENTS

Parents will be concerned to learn all they can about the symptoms of such diseases as measles, chicken pox, mumps, scarlet fever, whooping cough, the common cold, and influenza.\* Such information would make it possible to isolate an ill person as soon as early symptoms appear, thereby preventing the spread of his disease and possibly lightening the severity of the illness. It would also enable the adult to give an intelligent telephone description of the symptoms to the doctor.

### ONE MUST BE PRUDENT

Many illnesses are spread by persons who disregard the importance of isolation and quarantine. In rural areas, it is difficult to enforce quarantines. Every family should be on its honor to see that no member of the family is guilty of spreading a disease.

### KEEPING THE FAMILY HAPPY

It is impossible to keep the family physically well unless it is mentally well, or, in other words, unless it is happy. The happiness of the family depends on the state of mind of each individual member. So our task is one of helping individuals live happily with others. Help them develop the attitude, "It isn't what happens to you that counts, it's how you take it."

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\* For description of symptoms see "Red Cross Home Nursing Textbook" or the Chart on Common Diseases Among Children prepared by Oklahoma State Health Department.

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