



# VitalCare Annual Provider Training Module

## Module Overview

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*This training module is designed to provide in-home healthcare professionals with essential knowledge and skills related to behavior management techniques, the promotion of Client rights, dignity, and independence, prevention of abuse and neglect, Disaster and Emergency Procedures, Infection Control using Universal Precautions, Basic First Aid and Home Safety. The module will also cover legal guidelines and reporting requirements to ensure the highest quality of care and ethical standards.*

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## Module Outline

1. Client Rights and Dignity
  - a) Definition of Client Rights in Healthcare
  - b) Client Rights
  - c) Upholding Dignity, Independence, and Self-Determination
  - d) Autonomy, Privacy, Independence, and Respect
2. Behavior Management Techniques
  - a) Positive Reinforcement Strategies
  - b) Active Listening and Effective Communication
  - c) Establishing Routines and Predictability
  - d) Redirecting Challenging Behaviors
  - e) Collaborating with Families and Caregivers
3. Abuse and Neglect Prevention
  - a) Definition of Abuse and Neglect
  - b) Types of Abuse
  - c) Identifying Potential Risk Factors
  - d) Strategies to Prevent Abuse and Neglect
  - e) Reporting Requirements
4. Disaster and Emergency Preparedness
  - a) Natural Disasters in Colorado
  - b) Emergency Preparedness Planning
  - c) Fire Evacuation Procedures
  - d) Shelter-in-place procedures
5. Basic First Aid
  - a) Definition of Basic First Aid
  - b) Emergency action planning
  - c) Basic First Aid Reference Guide
6. Universal Precautions
  - a) Definition of Universal Precautions
  - b) Examples of Food Safety Practices
  - c) Influenza Vaccine Requirements
  - d) Universal Precautions Reference Guide

This training is intended to be self-guided. Please thoroughly read and review each of the sections. Take note of any questions or further clarifications that you may have. Once you have completed all the modules, please email any unanswered questions or comments to your VitalCare Supervisor once you have completed all the modules. - *Thank you for your participation.*

## Employee Annual Training Acknowledgement Form

As mandated by VitalCare employee policies, this annual training meets or exceeds the requirements of the Code of Colorado Regulations applicable to Class B - Home Health Care Agencies, as outlined in 6 CCR 1011-1 Chapter 26, 8.6 (F)(1)(a).

### Acknowledgements:

1. By initialing and signing below, I acknowledge that I have received the VitalCare annual training outlining the six topics listed below.

\_\_\_\_\_ Client Rights and Dignity  
\_\_\_\_\_ Behavior Management Techniques  
\_\_\_\_\_ Abuse and Neglect Prevention  
\_\_\_\_\_ Disaster and Emergency Preparedness  
\_\_\_\_\_ Basic First Aid  
\_\_\_\_\_ Universal Precautions

2. I understand it is my responsibility to read, comprehend, and follow the educational topics presented in this packet.
3. I will contact VitalCare via email with any questions or for clarification on the training information presented in these modules.
4. I confirm that this page has been signed, dated, and returned to my VitalCare Support Team.

### Employee Details:

Printed Name of Employee: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Employee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

*Once you have completed this training, please return this signed and dated form via email, in person, or via fax to your supervisor. This form **must** be returned to receive credit for completing the annual training.*

For Office Use:

Signed form received by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

## CLIENT RIGHTS AND DIGNITY

### DEFINITION OF CLIENT RIGHTS IN HEALTHCARE

*Client rights in healthcare refer to the fundamental entitlements and protections afforded to individuals who seek or receive healthcare services. These rights are designed to ensure that patients/clients receive safe, respectful, and quality care while maintaining their dignity, autonomy, and involvement in healthcare decisions. Client rights in healthcare encompass various principles and guarantees that providers and organizations are expected to uphold.*

### CLIENT'S BILL OF RIGHTS

**Right to Consent:** Patients have the right to give informed consent before any medical procedure or treatment is administered. This includes understanding the purpose of the procedure, potential risks, and expected outcomes.

**Right to Information:** Patients have the right to receive clear and accurate information about their medical condition, treatment options, risks, benefits, and alternatives. They should be informed in a language and manner they understand, enabling them to make informed decisions about their care.

**Right to Privacy and Confidentiality:** Patients' personal and medical information must be kept confidential and only shared with authorized individuals involved in their care. Privacy includes physical, psychological, and informational aspects.

**Right to Complaint and Remedy:** Patients have the right to voice concerns, provide feedback, and file complaints about their healthcare experiences. Adequate mechanisms for resolving grievances and seeking redress should be available.

**Right to Safe and Ethical Care:** Patients have the right to receive care that adheres to ethical principles and safeguards their safety. This includes protection from unnecessary procedures, overcharging, and harmful practices.

**Right to Quality Care:** Patients have the right to receive care that meets established standards of quality, safety, and effectiveness. This includes access to trained and competent healthcare professionals, appropriate facilities, and evidence-based treatments.

**Right to Access and Equity:** Patients should have equitable access to healthcare services without discrimination based on factors such as gender, race, religion, socioeconomic status, or disability.

**Right to Dignity and Respect:** Patients have the right to be treated with dignity, respect, and sensitivity, regardless of their background, condition, or circumstances. This extends to communication, physical care, and emotional support.

**Right to Continuity of Care:** Patients have the right to receive consistent and coordinated care, especially during transitions between healthcare settings or providers.

**Right to Autonomy and Informed Decision-Making:** Patients have the right to make choices about their healthcare based on accurate information and personal values. Healthcare providers should respect patients' decisions, even if they differ from the provider's recommendation.



Client rights in healthcare are essential for building trust between patients and healthcare providers, fostering collaborative relationships, and ensuring that healthcare services are centered around the well-being and preferences of the individual receiving care. These rights are often enshrined in laws, regulations, and ethical guidelines to ensure their protection and enforcement.

## IMPORTANCE OF UPHOLDING DIGNITY, INDEPENDENCE, AND SELF-DETERMINATION

*Upholding dignity, independence, and self-determination in healthcare is crucial for fostering a respectful and empowering environment for clients. These principles ensure that individuals feel valued, respected, and in control of their lives and decisions, which can significantly enhance their quality of life and well-being.*

### AUTONOMY, PRIVACY, INDEPENDENCE, AND RESPECT

Allowing clients to make decisions about their daily routines, such as choosing their meals or selecting their clothing, reinforces their sense of autonomy and respect.

Conversely, tasks that violate these principles include making decisions for clients without their input, such as selecting their attire or meals without consultation or disregarding their preferences and cultural practices.

Additionally, ignoring a client's ability to perform certain tasks independently, like brushing their teeth or dressing, and instead performing these tasks for them can undermine their sense of independence and self-worth.

Respecting privacy and personal boundaries also play a vital role in maintaining dignity and independence.

For example, closing doors during personal care activities ensures privacy and prevents unnecessary exposure, which respects the client's dignity. Avoiding snooping or rummaging through personal belongings without permission preserves their sense of control over their personal space.

***Not taking photos or filming upholds their privacy and respects their autonomy.***

Describing tasks before performing them allows clients to understand what will happen and allows them to consent or express preferences, thereby promoting their self-determination.

*Consider the scenario of an elderly woman named Margaret who has been receiving in-home health care following a recent hip surgery. Despite her physical limitations, Margaret is an intelligent and fiercely independent individual who values her autonomy. The healthcare professionals attending to Margaret recognize the importance of respecting her dignity by involving her in decisions about her care plan, actively listening to her preferences, and acknowledging her contributions to the decision-making process. By fostering her independence, they encourage Margaret to engage in her own recovery, make choices about her daily activities, and take ownership of her rehabilitation process. This approach not only empowers Margaret but also contributes to her emotional well-being, instilling a sense of purpose and control during a challenging phase of her life. By upholding her dignity and self-determination, the healthcare team creates an environment where Margaret's individuality is honored, leading to a more positive and empowering healthcare experience overall.*



**Upholding dignity, independence, and self-determination in healthcare involves involving clients in decisions, respecting their autonomy, and maintaining privacy. Key practices include closing doors during personal care, not snooping, avoiding unauthorized photos or filming, and explaining tasks beforehand. These actions ensure clients feel respected and in control, enhancing their well-being.**

## BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

*As home care providers, mastering effective behavior management techniques is essential for fostering a supportive and enriching environment for your clients. These techniques not only enhance the quality of care you provide but also contribute to the overall well-being and satisfaction of those under your supervision.*



### POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT STRATEGIES

Utilizing positive reinforcement is a powerful approach to encourage desired behaviors. Recognizing and rewarding your clients' accomplishments, whether they are small achievements or significant milestones, can motivate them to engage more actively in their care routines. Celebrating successes can help create a positive atmosphere and instill a sense of accomplishment, boosting their self-esteem and overall outlook.

### ACTIVE LISTENING AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Active Listening and Effective Communication: Being an attentive listener and practicing effective communication skills are integral components of successful behavior management. By genuinely listening to your client's concerns, preferences, and needs, you establish trust and rapport. Clear and open communication allows you to address any challenges or uncertainties promptly, helping to minimize misunderstandings and potential conflicts.

### ESTABLISHING ROUTINES AND PREDICTABILITY

Creating structured routines can provide a sense of predictability and comfort for your clients. Establishing consistent daily schedules for activities, meals, and care routines can help reduce anxiety and confusion, especially for those dealing with cognitive impairments. Predictability lends a feeling of control, contributing to their overall well-being.

### REDIRECTING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

Challenging behaviors can sometimes arise due to discomfort, frustration, or communication barriers. Instead of reacting negatively, consider redirecting these behaviors through gentle interventions. Offering alternative activities, engaging in calming conversations, or providing sensory stimuli can effectively redirect their focus and create a more harmonious environment.

### COLLABORATING WITH FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS

Recognize the importance of involving family members, responsible parties and caregivers in behavior management strategies. Regular communication with them allows for a holistic understanding of your clients' needs, preferences, and any challenges they might be facing. Collaboratively developing and implementing strategies ensures consistency in care and reinforces the sense of a united support system.



**You contribute to the emotional well-being and overall satisfaction of your clients. Everyone is unique, and tailoring your approach to their specific needs and preferences is key. Your commitment to employing these techniques exemplifies your dedication to delivering care that enriches their lives on multiple levels.**



## ABUSE AND NEGLECT PREVENTION

*Safeguarding the well-being and safety of your clients is of utmost importance in your role as a home care provider. Understanding abuse and neglect, as well as implementing prevention strategies, is a critical component of your responsibility.*

### DEFINITION OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Abuse refers to the intentional infliction of harm, distress, or discomfort upon a vulnerable individual. Neglect involves the failure to provide necessary care, attention, or protection. Both abuse and neglect can take various forms, including physical, emotional, sexual, and financial mistreatment. Recognizing and addressing these forms of harm is essential for maintaining a safe environment for your clients.

### TYPES OF ABUSE

#### PHYSICAL ABUSE

Any form of violence or harm.

#### EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Psychological distress.

#### SEXUAL ABUSE

Non-consensual acts.

#### FINANCIAL ABUSE

Assets are improperly used or exploited.

### IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL RISK FACTORS

Be vigilant in identifying potential risk factors for abuse and neglect. These can include **isolation, dependency on caregivers, cognitive impairments, communication difficulties, or strained family dynamics**. Clients who are particularly vulnerable due to age, health conditions, or other factors require extra attention and proactive preventive measures.

### STRATEGIES TO PREVENT ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Implementing effective prevention strategies is crucial in ensuring the safety and well-being of your clients. Open and clear communication is key; establishing channels through which clients can report concerns and ensure they feel comfortable discussing any mistreatment. Be always mindful of their physical and emotional well-being. Promptly communicate with your VitalCare team if you notice any signs of abuse or neglect. Participate in ongoing training to stay updated on best practices and to better recognize potential signs of abuse or neglect.



**Your commitment to abuse and neglect prevention demonstrates your dedication to the safety and dignity of your clients. By being vigilant, proactive, and empathetic, you contribute to creating a nurturing environment that promotes trust, security, and overall well-being.**



# Mandatory Reporter Reference Guide

## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS OF ABUSE IN HOME HEALTHCARE FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS

As a VitalCare employee you are a **MANDATORY REPORTER** - this means you are legally obligated to report suspected or observed incidents of abuse, to the appropriate authorities.

### Children

**Physical Abuse:** If you suspect or witness any form of physical harm or injury inflicted on a child under your care, immediately report it to the relevant authorities, such as Child Protective Services (CPS) or local law enforcement. Document your observations and any relevant details to support your report.

**Emotional Abuse:** Emotional abuse can have lasting impacts on a child's well-being. If you notice signs of emotional abuse, such as verbal degradation, humiliation, or manipulation, report your concerns to the appropriate authorities or child protective agencies.

**Sexual Abuse:** Suspected or disclosed instances of sexual abuse involving a child should be reported to law enforcement and child protective services without delay. Ensure the child's safety and well-being by following mandated reporting protocols.

### Adults

**Physical or Emotional Abuse:** In the case of suspected or witnessed physical or emotional abuse of an adult under your care, report the incident to Adult Protective Services (APS) or the designated agency responsible for safeguarding adults in your jurisdiction. Document your observations and any relevant details for your report.

**Financial Abuse:** If you suspect financial exploitation of an adult, where their assets are misused or manipulated, report the concerns to the appropriate authorities. Depending on your jurisdiction, this could involve APS or relevant financial regulatory bodies.

**Neglect:** Neglect occurs when an individual's basic needs, such as food, shelter, hygiene, or medical care, are not adequately met. If you observe signs of neglect, report your concerns to the appropriate agencies responsible for adult protection.

**If you suspect abuse, neglect, or self-neglect:**

**Call the VitalCare office and speak with a team member.**

**CPS - Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 844-264-5437**

**APS - Call your county intake number found here:**  
<https://cdhs.colorado.gov/aps>

### Reporting Process:

**Immediate Action:** If you or someone in the home where you're working is or may be in immediate danger, contact **911 immediately and move to a safe place. Once you're safe and/or help has arrived, notify your VitalCare team of the events that occurred.**

**Follow Mandated Reporting:** You **MUST** make your report to law enforcement within **24 hours of witnessing or learning of the event.** Report child abuse or neglect to the statewide child abuse and neglect hotline at **1-844-CO-4-KIDS**. Report at-risk elder/adult abuse or neglect to local law enforcement. Find contact info here <https://www.usacops.com/co/> Complete Documentation: Write down as much objective information as you can - as soon as you can.

**Confidentiality:** Ensure confidentiality of the individual's information while reporting. Sharing only relevant information to the appropriate authorities is essential to protect their privacy.

**Don't investigate or seek details when someone is disclosing abuse to you. Listen carefully and report what you've learned/seen.**

**Colorado Dept of Human Services requests that when the reporter is interacting with a child, they use language that is "simple, supportive, objective, and not probative."**





## DISASTER AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

### NATURAL DISASTERS IN COLORADO

In Colorado, natural disasters such as wildfires, floods, winter storms, and tornadoes pose significant risks to in-home healthcare settings, potentially disrupting services and endangering both clients and providers. These events can lead to power outages, water supply issues, and transportation challenges, making it difficult to access necessary medical supplies and support.



In-home healthcare clients, particularly those with mobility issues or chronic illnesses, are especially vulnerable during such emergencies. Therefore, understanding the specific impacts of each type of disaster common in Colorado is crucial to be prepared in the event of an emergency. Disaster preparedness is essential to ensure the safety and continuity of care for clients, enabling healthcare providers to respond swiftly and efficiently.

This includes having awareness of procedures and who to contact in an emergency to mitigate the adverse effects of natural disasters and protect the health and well-being of clients.

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANNING

**Keep Communication Devices Ready:** Ensure your phone is fully always charged and have a backup power source, such as a portable charger or power bank, readily available.

**Understand Your Environment:** Familiarize yourself with the client's home layout and identify all possible evacuation routes. Ensure these routes are clear of obstructions.

**Emergency Contact Information:** Locate and verify the client's list of emergency contacts. If it's not easily accessible, create a comprehensive list, including phone numbers for family members, healthcare providers, and local emergency services. Place the emergency contact list in a prominent and easily accessible location, such as on the refrigerator.

**Adhere to Agency Guidelines:** Follow any specific emergency preparedness instructions provided by VitalCare during emergencies.



Natural disasters such as wildfires, floods, winter storms, and tornadoes in Colorado pose significant risks to in-home healthcare settings, potentially disrupting services and endangering both clients and providers. Effective emergency preparedness, including maintaining communication devices, understanding evacuation routes, and adhering to agency guidelines, is essential to ensure the safety and continuity of care for vulnerable clients.

### HERE ARE SOME ESSENTIAL TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL EVACUATION:

**Alert the Client:** Inform the client about the fire and the need to evacuate immediately. Provide clear and concise instructions on what they need to do and reassure them throughout the process.

**Check for Fire Hazards:** Before moving, assess the immediate surroundings for any fire hazards that could pose a danger during evacuation. Avoid areas with smoke and flames by staying low if possible.

**Use Safe Evacuation Routes:** Identify the safest evacuation route based on the location of the fire and the layout of the building. Use designated fire exits, avoid elevators

**Cover Airways:** If there is smoke, use a cloth or garment to cover both your and the client's mouth and nose to reduce inhalation of smoke and toxins.

**Proceed to Safety:** Once outside, move to a safe location away from the building. Stay together with the client and proceed to a designated meeting point or a safe area identified by emergency personnel. \*

**If you are unable to evacuate, SIGNAL FOR HELP by waving a flashlight or cloth out of a window. If possible, call emergency services to inform them of your location.**

## SHELTER-IN-PLACE PROCEDURES

### Steps to follow during a blizzard:

- 1. Stay Informed:** Monitor weather alerts from reliable sources to stay updated on the blizzard's progress and emergency advisories. Communicate any pertinent information to the client.
- 2. Maintain Warmth:** If heat is unavailable, close off unused rooms, seal cracks around doors and cover windows using blankets. Keep extra blankets, warm clothing, and sleeping bags available. In case of power outages, use alternative heating sources safely, such as space heaters, ensuring they are placed away from flammable materials and used in well-ventilated area.
- 3. Contact VitalCare Office Staff:** as soon as reasonable, office staff will reach the Client's representative/emergency contact(s) for emergency pick up or to take over care. \*

*\*Staff will contact 911 emergency authorities in the event that no other transportation for any Client is available.*

### Steps to follow during a tornado:

- 1. Stay Informed:** Monitor weather alerts and notify VitalCare office staff immediately.
- 2. Seek safety:** avoid glass areas and exterior walls and will not leave the home unless existing conditions deem it advisable.
- 3. Contact VitalCare Office Staff:** After the advisory is over report injuries and damage to emergency medical authorities via 911 first and VitalCare staff second.



## BASIC FIRST AID

### DEFINITION OF BASIC FIRST AID IN HOME HEALTHCARE

*As the first line of defense in homes, providers play a vital role in preventing injuries and ensuring client safety. Key considerations for providers include knowing the location of the First Aid Kit in each client's home, being aware of any conditions that might make clients more susceptible to medical events, and ensuring emergency contact numbers are easily accessible. Potential emergencies providers should be prepared for include falls, cuts and wounds, heart attacks, strokes, poisoning, choking, burns, and seizures. In emergency situations when a responsible party is unavailable, calling 911 immediately is crucial, as emergency responders are trained to assist and make critical decisions regarding care.*

### EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

*Emergencies can feel overwhelming and stressful. One way to ease this stress is to practice emergency and disaster preparedness. A great way to prepare is to have an agreed upon emergency action plan. Inquire with your client, their responsible party or parent to find out if they have an existing plan or if they would be interested in working on one together. Below is an example Emergency Action Plan. Having this information prepared and placed in an easy to find location can bring you, as a provider, more confidence when caring for clients.*

**CLIENT INFORMATION:**  
CLIENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:**  
EMERGENCY CONTACT #1: NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RELATIONSHIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ CAN THIS PHONE RECEIVE TEXT MESSAGES? \_\_\_\_\_  
EMERGENCY CONTACT #2: NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ RELATIONSHIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ CAN THIS PHONE RECEIVE TEXT MESSAGES? \_\_\_\_\_

**PRIMARY PHYSICIAN:**  
PHYSICIAN NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ PREFERRED HOSPITAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
MEDICAL CONDITIONS/ALLERGIES: \_\_\_\_\_  
SPECIAL EQUIPMENT NEEDS (E.G., OXYGEN, WHEELCHAIR, ETC.): \_\_\_\_\_

**MEDICAL EMERGENCY:**  
SIGNS OF EMERGENCY: DIFFICULTY BREATHING - CHEST PAIN - UNRESPONSIVE - SEVERE BLEEDING - SEIZURE - ALLERGIC REACTION  
IMMEDIATE ACTIONS: 1. CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY 2. ADMINISTER FIRST AID/CPR IF TRAINED 3. INFORM EMERGENCY CONTACTS  
CHECKLIST: ☐ EMERGENCY CONTACTS LIST IS ACCESSIBLE ☐ FIRST AID KIT IS AVAILABLE AND STOCKED ☐ MEDICAL INFORMATION IS UP-TO-DATE

**FIRE EMERGENCY:**  
SIGNS OF EMERGENCY: SMOKE OR FIRE DETECTED - SMOKE ALARMS SOUNDING  
IMMEDIATE ACTIONS: 1. EVACUATE THE PREMISES IMMEDIATELY (DO NOT USE ELEVATORS) 2. CALL 911 3. INFORM EMERGENCY CONTACTS  
CHECKLIST: ☐ SMOKE ALARMS ARE FUNCTIONAL ☐ FIRE EXTINGUISHERS ARE ACCESSIBLE ☐ EVACUATION PLAN IS KNOWN AND PRACTICED  
EVACUATION PLAN/MEETING PLACE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Practice Drills:** ☐ FIRE DRILL CONDUCTED ☐ EVACUATION DRILL CONDUCTED ☐ SHELTER IN PLACE DRILL



# Basic First Aid Reference Guide

## Bleeding

**Apply direct pressure** to the wound using a sterile gauze pad or clean cloth.  
**Elevate the injured area** above the level of the heart if there is no fracture.  
**Cover the dressing with a pressure bandage.** If bleeding does not stop apply additional dressings.

If necessary, apply pressure to the artery with your hand.



## Burn

**Stop the burning.** Remove the person from the source of the burn.  
**Cool the burn.** Hold burned area under cool (not cold or icy) running water or immerse for 10 to 15 minutes. Use cool compresses if water is unavailable.  
**Cover the burn.** Cover burn with non-adhesive sterile bandage or clean cloth.  
**Prevent shock.** Lay the person down and elevate the legs.



## Fracture

**Help the person support the injured areas.** Stop any bleeding by applying pressure with sterile bandage or clean cloth. *Check for feeling, warmth and color below fracture.*  
**Cover the burn Immobilize the injured area.** Apply a soft or hard splint, above and below the fracture.  
**Treat for shock.** Lay the person down and elevate the legs.



## Sprain

**Rest the ankle or injured area.**  
**Apply ice or cold packs** (wrap in cloth or put cloth under to protect the skin).  
**Compress by lightly wrapping an elastic bandage** around the injured area.  
**Elevate the injured area** above heart level to reduce swelling.



## Falls

**Stay Calm!!!**

**Call 911 if needed**  
**Check/Ask** about pain and injuries  
**Do not** get client up right away.  
If not serious, help up into a chair and continue to monitor.  
Call family/emergency contact and Supervisor to alert to fall



## Seizure

**Follow seizure plan. If no plan, CALL 911 and follow instructions provided by operator.**  
Let the seizure take its course.  
Keep them safe by removing anything from area that could be a hazard.  
Do not restrain in anyway or force anything into the mouth.  
Place them in a recovery position by rolling them onto their side.



## Choking

**If you are alone, perform abdominal thrusts before calling 911.**

**If two people are available, SEND SOMEONE TO CALL 911**



**Coughing:** encourage coughing.  
**Back blows:** Lean them forward and give up to 5 sharp blows between the shoulder blades. Check their mouth.  
**Abdominal thrusts:**  
- Stand behind the person. Wrap your arms around their waist.  
- Make a fist with one the other hand. Press hard into the abdomen.  
with quick inward and upward thrust.  
- Perform 5 abdominal thrusts (Heimlich Maneuver).  
**If the person becomes unconscious:** Begin BLS/CPR

## Stroke

**F**

Ask the person to smile.

**A**

Ask them to hold out both arms.

**S**

Ask them to repeat a simple sentence to be sure.

**T**

If a person shows any of these symptoms **CALL 911**

**SIGNS OF A STROKE**

**THIS IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY CALL 911!**

Follow the instructions of the 911 operator.  
**If Conscious:** Support head/shoulders on pillows, loosen tight clothing. Wipe away secretions from mouth. Maintain body temperature and ensure the airway is clear and open.

**If Unconscious but breathing:** Place them in a recovery position by rolling them onto their side.

**If Unconscious but not breathing:** Begin BLS/CPR

## Heart Attack

**SIGNS OF A HEART ATTACK**

Feeling of a pounding heartbeat

Chest pain or discomfort

Lightheadedness or dizziness

Rapid or irregular heartbeats

Shortness of breath or wheezing

Fainting or near fainting

**THIS IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY CALL 911!**

Follow the instructions of the 911 operator.  
**Help the person sit down.** Sitting eases strain on heart and can help prevent injury if they collapse.  
**Loosen tight clothing:** tight clothing can restrict breathing.  
**Provide reassurance** and stay calm.

Monitor DRABCDs and be prepared to administer CPR if the casualty becomes unconscious and stops breathing.



## UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS FOR INFECTION CONTROL

### DEFINITION OF UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS IN HOMECARE SETTINGS

*To reduce infection risks in homecare, providers should practice thorough hand hygiene, use PPE like gloves, masks, gowns, and eye protection as needed, and regularly clean and disinfect surfaces with appropriate products. Maintain respiratory hygiene by covering coughs and sneezes, disposing of tissues, and wearing masks if symptomatic. When handling soiled laundry, wear gloves, avoid shaking, and wash with hot water. Follow food safety guidelines. Use contact precautions with contagious patients by limiting contact, using barriers, and disinfecting the environment regularly.*

### EXAMPLES OF FOOD SAFETY PRACTICES

**Hand Hygiene:** Washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food, especially raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs.

**Proper Cooking Temperatures:** Cooking meats to safe internal temperatures (e.g., 165°F for poultry, 160°F for ground beef) to ensure harmful bacteria are killed.

**Food Storage:** Storing leftovers in shallow containers to cool quickly and reheat them to at least 165°F before consumption.

**Proper Thawing:** Thawing frozen foods in the refrigerator, under cold running water, or in the microwave, rather than at room temperature, to prevent bacterial growth.

**Washing Produce:** Rinsing fruits and vegetables under running water before eating or cooking, even if they will be peeled.

**Cross-Contamination Prevention:** Using separate cutting boards and utensils for raw and cooked foods to avoid the transfer of bacteria.

**Refrigeration:** Keeping perishable foods refrigerated at or below 40°F to slow the growth of bacteria.

**Surface Cleaning:** Regularly cleaning and disinfecting kitchen surfaces, including countertops, cutting boards, and utensils, with appropriate cleaning products.

**Checking Expiration Dates:** Ensuring that food items are used before their expiration dates and discarding any spoiled or questionable items.



### HEALTH CARE WORKER INFLUENZA VACCINE REQUIREMENTS

#### **"Flu/Influenza Season" typically runs from November through March.**

All VitalCare employees have a shared responsibility to prevent the spread of infection and avoid causing harm to clients by taking reasonable precautions to prevent the transmission of vaccine-preventable diseases. Vaccine programs are, therefore, an essential part of infection prevention and control for slowing or stopping the transmission of seasonal influenza viruses from adversely affecting those individuals who are most susceptible.

**Colorado's Rule 6 CCR 1011-1 Chap 02, passed in 2012, requires that 90% of licensed home care employees receive an annual flu shot by December 31st each year.**

**The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends annual flu vaccination for everyone age 6 months or older. The flu vaccine can lower your risk of getting the flu. It also can lower the risk of having serious illness from the flu.**



**Each fall VitalCare hosts a free Flu Shot Clinic**



# Universal Precautions Reference Guide

## Hand Hygiene

Proper hand hygiene is the most effective way to prevent infections.

### Steps for Proper Handwashing:

1. **Wet Hands:** Use clean, running water (warm or cold) to wet your hands thoroughly. Apply soap.
2. **Lather:** Rub your hands together to create a lather. Make sure to cover all surfaces, including the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. **Scrub:** Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. An easy way to time this is by humming the "Happy Birthday" song twice.
4. **Rinse:** Rinse your hands well under clean, running water to remove all soap and contaminants.
5. **Dry:** Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them. If possible, use a towel to turn off the faucet to avoid re-contaminating your hands.



## Personal Protective Equipment

Using personal protective equipment (PPE) is crucial in healthcare settings to protect both caregivers and patients from the transmission of infections. PPE such as gloves, masks, gowns, and eye protection creates a barrier against harmful pathogens, reducing the risk of exposure to body fluids, respiratory droplets, and other contaminants. Proper use of PPE helps maintain a safe and hygienic environment, preventing the spread of infectious diseases and ensuring the health and safety of everyone involved.



### Cleaning and Disinfection

**Regularly** clean and disinfect surfaces.  
**Use** appropriate disinfectants that are effective against a broad spectrum of pathogens.  
**Follow** the manufacturer's instructions for proper use of cleaning products.

### Respiratory Hygiene

**Cover** your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when coughing or sneezing.  
**Dispose** of tissues and wash your hands.  
**Wear** a mask if you have respiratory symptoms to protect others.