

Disposing of Dirty Diapers



Public Health Reasons

Microorganisms can be transmitted to people and other surfaces from droplets leaking from a child's diaper, as well as the improper disposal of a soiled diaper, such as placing a soiled diaper on the ground. These microorganisms can include gastrointestinal pathogens. Because infants (younger than 12 months old) are especially effective carriers of enteric pathogens (pathogens present in the human gastrointestinal tract), soiled diapers increase microbial pathogens in solid waste and impact human health. Storing and handling soiled diapers increases the potential for contamination and the spread of infection. Barlett et al. studied the association of hygiene behavior indicators with persistent diarrhea of young children. They found that six behavioral indicators maintained significant association with persistent diarrhea in young children. Three of those indicators were associated with dirty diapers: the presence of a fecally soiled diaper on the floor, the presence of feces in the play area, and a child wearing a fecally soiled diaper.

Practices

After Changing A Diaper

- Fold the soiled surface of the diaper inward.
- Put soiled, disposable diapers in a plastic-lined, covered, hands-free receptacle.
- The hands-free receptacle must be within arm's reach of the child-care provider.
- Soiled diapers do not have to be individually bagged before disposal.
- See "Vomiting and Fecal Episodes" fact sheet for proper methods of disposing fecal waste, including diapers.

Cloth Diapers

- Do not rinse or dump cloth diapers at the child-care facility.
- Soiled cloth diapers must be stored in a labeled container with a tight-fitting lid provided by an accredited commercial diaper service or in a sealed plastic bag for removal by the family.
- Send the sealed plastic bag home with the child at the end of the day.
- The containers or sealed diaper bags of soiled cloth diapers must be placed out of reach of children, and away from food or toys.

References

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Authors and Acknowledgements

AUTHORS: Cortney Miller, MS, Angela Fraser, PhD, Roman Sturgis, MFA (editor), Xi Chen, MS, Anna Saunders. Department of Food, Nutrition, and Packaging Sciences, Clemson University, Clemson, SC 29634

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