



Healthy Camp *Nugget*



Markel is proud to be an ACA
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the ACA Healthy Camp Study.



Reduce Colds, Sore Throats & Stuffy Noses this Summer

No one likes the Crud but, about week three, everyone seems to come down with sore throats, coughs and stuffy noses, the kind that aren't part of allergy season. Take a step forward and put into practice strategies to lower that threshold:

During orientation, show staff "Why Don't We Do It in Our Sleeves?" This five minute CD will completely change how your staff cover their mouths when they cough or sneeze. Try it now for yourself—go to www.coughsafe.com and click on "View the Video" (see it listed on the left-hand side?). Be prepared for some chuckles and a better understanding of why the video is designed for "big kids" like you. Once your staff see this, they'll never again take "covering your mouth with your hands" so lightly! By the way, the website also tells you how to purchase a DVD of this video should you prefer that over online access.

Plan how your staff will get the campers to cough into their sleeves. Expect some hilarious approaches—in fact, insist on it! Get the entire camp to protect their hands from cough and sneeze contamination.

Wash hands, wash hands, wash hands. Wash them again. At minimum, put hand sanitizer pumps on each table and use those pumps before the food arrives.

Keep people at least an arm's distance from one another. I call these "Space Precautions." It's something I use to disperse germs and is especially effective for air-borne droplets that carry upper respiratory loving viruses and bacteria. This can get tricky in the dining room since that's often the place where we pack people in like sardines. To increase dining room space, put a table or two outside to dine al fresco while creating more space inside the dining room.

Keep sleeping heads far apart! Whether in a tent, sleeping in the cabin at night, or dozing under a tree during the Pause that Refreshes (rest hour), we don't want campers and staff inhaling someone else's gummy breath. Give 'em breathing room! Insist on it.

Wash hands again.

Keep hands away from faces. Hands may get covered with germs but if we never put those gummy fingers close to a body opening, the germs

die a dismal death from lack of moisture, heat, and human connectiveness. Nice! Clean hands certainly begin this battle, but keeping them away from portals of entry—that's the fancy term for "body openings"—deprives those germs from their entry point.

Stay well rested, hydrated and fed. Stressed humans—being over tired, chronically thirsty and not well nourished—are simply more susceptible because their body doesn't have the coping reserves to fight off viral and bacterial invasions. We do a pretty good job of taking care of the campers but prod your staff into doing a better job of this regarding themselves.

Head Injures: Minimize the Bonk!

Last summer's data included a fairly high number of head injuries. Since these have the potential for life-long impact, let's target a reduction in the number of head injuries this summer. Here are some risk reduction ideas:

If the activity should use head protection, be sure people are not only using the protection but also using it properly (sized right, correctly attached/buckled, etc).

Since little kids are top heavy—their heads are proportionately larger than their bodies—coach staff to monitor the ground surface upon which these kids run. Maybe we can modify the surface so head bonks are cushioned?

Identify "Running Permitted Here" areas of camp and then manage that space appropriately. All too often we tell kids not to run and fail to identify where running is just fine. Give them a place to run off extra energy, places that have been designed for that (e.g., rocks removed, covered with mowed grass or wood shavings).

Tell your Health Center staff to tell you about the context in which head injuries occur. Have them ask pertinent questions so you understand the conditions that contributed to that head injury. Intentionally learn from that data, especially with regard to things you can modify.

Stay tuned for more Golden Nuggets!

Until then, have fun, play safe and keep smiling!