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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect your skin daily, particularly your feet to catch any skin problems early. Moisturize your skin regularly and protect your hands and feet, particularly after bathing. Washing your hands is the easiest and most important method of protecting against bacteria. Drink water. Maintaining hydration is very important. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use “broad spectrum sunscreen” that protects against both ultraviolet B radiation (UVB) and ultraviolet A radiation (UVA). Limit time you spend in the sun between 10am and 4pm. Trim your fingernails and toenails carefully to avoid small cuts or tears. Avoid sharing personal items, like towels and razors. |
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Green Flags – All Clear

What this means:

If you have:

- No open wounds, rashes, or skin breakdown
- A habit of regularly washing your hands

- Good work!

Keep up the great work!

Yellow Flags – Caution

What this means:

If you have any of the following:

- Red, painful pustules
- Non-healing wounds or wounds that are draining yellow pus
- Inflamed boils (can be the size of a pea to the size of an orange)
- Area of skin that is tender, swollen and painful
- Red, cracked, or flaky skin
- Itching
- A mole that changes color or shape
- A dome-shape bump that appears shiny or “pearly”
- History of sunburn and long periods of sun exposure
- Have a mild fever ranging from 101- 103, or a moderate fever from 102- 103

- You may have an infection, an abscess, or a skin ulcer
- You could be having a side effect to a medication
- You could have a type of skin cancer
- Prolonged exposure to the sun without a sunscreen places you at higher risk for skin cancer

Call your doctor, nurse, or home health nurse if symptoms do not improve.

Name:

Number:

Instructions:

If you notice a Yellow Flag, work closely with your health care team.

Red Flags—Stop and Think

What this means:

If you have:

- Red, swollen, tender skin and you have a fever of 100.4 or greater
- A crepitus or crackling, popping sensation under the skin due to gas in the soft tissues
- A rash
- A fever of 104 or higher

- You may have an infection or allergic reaction to a food, medication, or plant
- You need to be evaluated by a health care professional immediately

This indicates you need to be seen by a physician right away. Follow these instructions: call 9-1-1

If possible, notify your health care provider’s office:

Physician:

Number:

If you notice a Red Flag, call your physician immediately.

Skin Health Fast Facts

- Your skin is the largest and most visible organ of the human body. It is an ever-changing organ that contains many specialized cells and structures.
- The skin functions as a protective barrier against environmental factors and it is very involved in maintaining the proper temperature for the body to function well.
- Skin plays an active role in the immune system protecting us from disease. The skin has three layers—the epidermis, dermis, and subcutaneous tissue.
- Your skin care routine will change as you age
- Dry skin is skin that scales or flakes off that is not caused by a specific medical condition.
- You can help prevent dry skin by taking a shower no longer than 10 minutes with warm water. A longer shower can dry out your skin, as can water that is too hot.
- It is important to protect your skin against the sun. Prolonged sun exposure can lead to age spots, skin cancers and other skin problems.
- Smoking narrows the tiny blood vessels in the outermost layers of skin and decreases blood flow, causing a depletion of oxygen and nutrients that skin needs for health. If you smoke, consider quitting or reducing the amount that you smoke daily.
- Skin and soft tissue bacterial infections are common in IV drug use. This is caused from injection of drugs into the fatty layer under the skin, the leakage of drugs out of veins during the injection, tissue death caused from the toxic materials in drugs, and an increase in the numbers of bacteria on the skin surface.
- If you have a wound, cover it completely!
- Use medications, including topical ointments/screens, as prescribed.
- If you stop a medication or treatment, check with your medical or mental health provider before restarting.
- Wash your hands:
 - ◊ Before, during, and after preparing food
 - ◊ Before eating food
 - ◊ Before and after caring for someone who is sick
 - ◊ Before and after treating a cut or wound
 - ◊ After using the toilet
 - ◊ After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
 - ◊ After touching an animal or animal waste

Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities of Southwest Washington

At the Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities, we believe every adult deserves to live with dignity. We connect seniors, adults with disabilities and family caregivers to a full range of free and other community resources designed to offer you choice, improve your quality of life and respect your independence.

For more information, call Information and Assistance

Clark County: 360-694-8144—iaclark@dshs.wa.gov

Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties: 360-577-4929—iakelso@dshs.wa.gov

Klickitat County: Goldendale: 509-773-3757 White Salmon: 509-493-3068—kcinfo@klickitatcounty.org

Skamania County: 509-427-3990—seniorsia@co.skamania.wa.gov

www.helpingelders.org