**Germ Defense Pyramid**

**Bleach-based cleaning routine kills 99.9% of household germs**

- **Once a Week**
  - faucets, appliance handles
  - kitchen countertops and appliances
  - toilet flush handle
  - **Tip:** Focus on “high touch” zones

- **Three times a Week**
  - sponges/dishcloths
  - kitchen sink and drain
  - spot clean after spills
  - **Tip:** Fill sink with 1 gallon of water and ¾ cup bleach. Soak sponges, then rinse to attack three problem areas in one easy step

- **Daily**
  - Bleach-based cleaners kill bacteria in the most germ-contaminated sites, including sponges, dishcloths, kitchen and bathroom sinks and the kitchen sink drain area.
  - Use bleach-based spray or a solution of bleach and water on cutting boards after every use to kill harmful bacteria like *E. coli* and *Salmonella*.
  - Clean up spills on kitchen countertops and floors as they occur and disinfect with a bleach-based cleaner.
  - **Tip:** Save time with bleach-based products that clean and disinfect in one step

- **Weekly**
  - Deep clean and disinfect toilet bowls and surfaces, bathroom countertops, showers, tubs and drain areas.
  - Floors in the bathroom and kitchen should be cleaned and disinfected with a bleach-base cleaner.
  - Deep clean the toilet bowl and surfaces, then drop a bowl cleaner tablet in the tank. One tablet kills 99.9 percent of germs in the bowl water with every flush.

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**Make Your Own Sanitizing Solution**

More isn’t better when it comes to sanitizing solutions. The following are safe and effective proportions for making sanitizing solutions for countertops, cutting boards, dishes, utensils and other surfaces.

- 1 tablespoon chlorine bleach per gallon water OR a scant 1 teaspoon chlorine bleach per quart water OR ¼ teaspoon chlorine bleach per cup water.
- Don’t use hot water or your solution will lose effectiveness. A water temperature less than 115°F is best.
- Also remember that chlorine sanitizing solutions lose their strength over time. For example, spray-on sanitizers should be remade at least daily or whenever you need them.

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**NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE**

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