

Fighting viruses

SEVEN HYGIENE TIPS

To protect yourself against colds, influenza and gastroenteritis, the following **seven hygiene tips** can help you reduce the risk of infection.



1 WASH YOUR HANDS AND AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE

It is important to pay special attention to hand hygiene because your hands are constantly coming into contact with objects and people and can transmit viruses to the membranes of your eyes, nose and mouth.

Wash your hands regularly, especially before preparing food, before eating, after having been to the toilet and when you get home.

Instructions for hand washing:

Hold hands under running water, rub soap for 20-30 seconds, being careful to include the area between your fingers, then rinse carefully and dry.

In public places use paper towels, if possible.

Avoid touching your face with your hands during the day.



2 COUGH IN A HYGIENIC WAY

Holding your hand in front of your mouth when coughing is polite but unhygienic. By coughing you spray a large number of viruses into your hands. If you touch objects or people afterwards you will spread these viruses. You should not cough into your hands, but rather into your sleeve. That way your hands remain clean.

Try to keep your distance from other people when coughing, and turn away from those closest to you.



3 STAY AT HOME UNTIL YOU ARE FULLY RECOVERED

If you are ill you should not go to work. You will not only endanger your own health and prolong the healing process, but you could also infect your colleagues and other people. If whole departments become ill this harms your employer significantly more than if one individual stays at home. If you go to work when ill, you are more likely to have concentration problems and to make mistakes.



So, when you are ill, do not go to work but stay at home until you have fully recovered. Get medical help if necessary. And remember – your health is an asset to you and to your colleagues!

4 PAY ATTENTION TO THE FIRST SIGNS OF ILLNESS

If you suffer from a cold or gastroenteritis you can infect other people. In the case of flu you can infect other people before even suffering the first symptoms yourself.

In the interest of protecting others, pay attention to the first signs of virus. Typical flu symptoms are sudden high fever, feeling severely ill, coughing and aching limbs. Sudden nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea can be signs of onset of the Novo virus. Take these signs seriously and pay particular attention to the hygiene advice in this leaflet to avoid spreading the disease further.

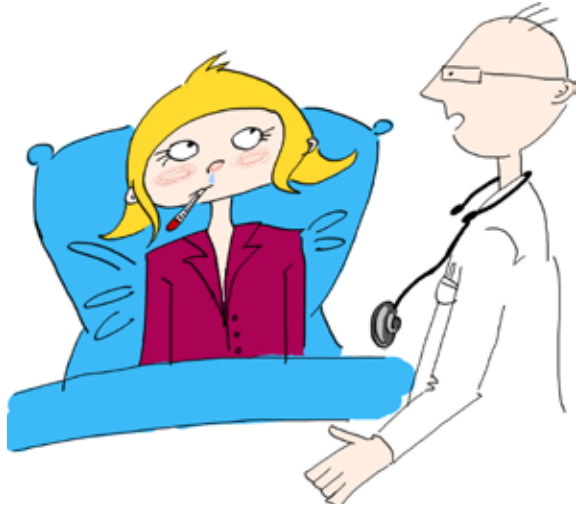


5 GETTING BACK TO GOOD HEALTH

During a viral illness it is necessary to take good care of yourself. Drink plenty of fluids, and rest in a calm and quiet environment. Teas and inhalations are useful as well as self medication against a blocked nose, sore throat etc.

The body's own defence system will play the biggest part in getting you better

- coughing and blowing your nose carry the viruses out of the body, while fever activates your defence system to full speed. After a few days of rest one usually feels much better.



Sometimes an illness can be so severe that self care is not sufficient, particularly among the elderly, the chronically ill and people with reduced immune systems. These groups should consult a doctor when suffering from flu.



6 PROTECT YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS

Keep your distance - avoid physical contact such as hugging and kissing.

If possible, sleep in a separate room.

Pay attention to the general cleanliness of your home, especially the kitchen and toilet/bathroom.

When sneezing, always use a tissue and be careful to throw it away.

7 AIR ROOMS REGULARLY AT HOME

Airing rooms regularly at home decreases the amount of viruses in the air and reduces the risk of infection.

It also improves the room's climate and prevents the membranes of your nose and mouth from drying out. This is very important to ward off viruses.

In the office, conditioned air is fresh, filtered and cleaner than the air outside. So, it is not necessary to open windows at the office.



WHAT HAPPENS IF THE WHOLE WORLD GETS SICK AT THE SAME TIME?

PANDEMIC FLU

If a particularly contagious and dangerous flu virus spreads worldwide, this is called an influenza pandemic. When many people get sick at the same time, everyday life can be seriously affected.

In case of influenza pandemic, in addition to the hygiene tips already mentioned the following two could also be important.

KEEP YOUR DISTANCE, KEEP AWAY FROM CROWDS

Do not shake hands or greet others with a kiss.

Avoid travelling in the affected areas.

Visit public institutions outside peak-hours.

Avoid events and places where many people gather, including public transport, cinemas, theatres, churches, conferences and concerts.

Pay attention to recommendations from local authorities.

KNOW HOW TO WEAR A MASK

A hygiene mask, worn over the nose and mouth, reduces most of the pathogens/germs that are exhaled by the user of the mask.

To a lesser degree it can also protect the user from inhaling viruses and other pathogens.

We do not yet have enough data concerning the effectiveness of these masks during a pandemic.

