



Health and Wellness
Month

eSafetyLine

Cold and Flu Prevention

One of the hottest topics in the news this fall and winter is the Flu, H1N1, the common cold and their prevention. No one wants to get any of these illnesses; they're uncomfortable, inconvenient and in certain instances, deadly. Thankfully the human body has a built-in defense system: Immunity. This is the body's ability to detect, find and destroy bacteria and viruses that don't belong in the body and can cause many different kinds of illnesses. Unfortunately, our immune system is not 100% effective; if it were no one would catch a cold or the flu. The best way to stay healthy is to do all you can to help and boost your immune system. The following is a list of some ways to help keep you and your family healthy during the cold and flu season.

- **Get the Shot-** An influenza vaccination gives 70- 90% protection against infection and can reduce the severity and side effects if you do get the flu. The flu shot is recommended for adults 50 and older, children 6 months to 5 years and "anyone who wants to reduce the chance of getting the flu". The best way to determine if the vaccine is right for you and your family and which vaccine to get is to discuss this with your doctor; they know your history and family best.
- **Sanitize-** Lots of research has been done and the findings all agree: When used correctly hand sanitizers eliminate nearly all germs. The correct way to use a sanitizer requires enough gel squirted into your hands so that they are still damp after 10- 15 seconds of rubbing them together. Another important factor when choosing a sanitizer is that it be made of at least 60% alcohol.
- **Avoid Your Face-** Germs need a way into the body to cause an illness and just sitting on your hands usually won't do the trick. The problem begins when you touch your eyes, nose or mouth. By not touching these areas you can help prevent the germs from getting in and causing an illness.

- Open Up! - Its no coincidence that when the temperature dropps, the likelihood of a cold or flu increases. Homes and businesses tend to keep doors and windows closed in cooler weather, trapping bacteria and viruses inside where they can thrive. It can be helpful to open doors or windows once a weeks (even in very cold temperatures) to allow fresh air in and force the stale, unhealthy air out.
- Use a Multi-Vitamin- We're not talking about some super high dose, expensive vitamin. These can be damaging to the body. All that is needed is a once a day multivitamin with 100% of the recommended daily amounts of vitamins A, B6, B12, C and D and the minerals Chromium, copper, Folic Acid, Selenium, Calcium and Zinc. Taking the vitamin with a meal that contains some fat (toast with butter or a ham sandwich) will help your body absorb the vitamins and minerals better. An 8oz glass of water will allow the pill to dissolve faster.
- Don't Share- This goes against everything Mom taught but sharing food, drinks or even a Chapstick with other people (even family members) can help to spread viruses and bacteria.
- Get to Sleep- Getting enough sleep during the cold and flu season is just aobut he most important type of prevention you can use. The other precautions you use; vaccines, vitamins, don't work very well if the body isn't rested enough to use them properly. Ideally, the body needs 7 ½ to 8 ½ hours sleep a night to function most effectively.

If all these precautions fail and you become sick, the best thing to do is to stay home. This will help prevent the further spreading of the illness among coworkers as well as giving your body the rest it needs to fight the infection and get well.

Discussion Questions

Why is it a good idea to open the doors or windows of your home once a week?

Why should you get between 7 ½ and 8 ½ hours sleep during cold and flu season?

MEETING / TRAINING ATTENDANCE ROSTER

COMPANY: _____

_____ SAFETY MEETING

JOB/DEPT: _____

_____ SAFETY TRAINING

DATE: ___/___/___

TIME: _____

TOPICS ADDRESSED: _____

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURES

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: _____

ACTION TAKEN: _____

Supervisor's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date

Safety Coordinator's Signature

_____/_____/_____
Date