



A series of bulletins intended to keep members informed and safe

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Subject: Stopping the spread of germs and illness

With the cold and flu season coming, you must take precautions so your office does not become a haven for germs. Developing good habits now will prevent the spread of illness this season.

The following tips will minimize the spread of germs in your workplace:

Wash your hands

The single most effective way to kill germs and stop the spread of disease is to use soap and hot water for 20 seconds. Wash your hands after using the washroom, before preparing or eating food, and frequently throughout the day.

Cover that cough

To stop the spread of germs, cough or sneeze with a tissue and dispose of it properly. Carry a clean tissue with you at all times. If you do not have a tissue handy, cough or sneeze into your sleeve. Wash your hands often. Follow this advice at home, as well, to protect your family at all times.

Keep your work area clean

If you are like most people, you are probably ready to blame your sniffing co-workers for your sickness, but chances are it is your own work area that is probably making you sick. A typical desk has about 21,000 germs per square inch. Compare that with an office toilet seat carrying 49 germs a square inch. Desk surfaces, phones, keyboards and computer mice are havens for germs because they are used so often. The best way to kill bacteria is to wipe down your work area with disinfectant.

Keep fit to boost your immune system

Your body has a better chance of fighting off viruses if you are in good shape. Maintaining a healthy and balanced diet, drinking plenty of fluids and doing a minimum of 30 minutes of daily exercise will safeguard your body for the onslaught of germs that the cold and flu season brings.

Stay in bed

If you are sick, do not drag yourself into the office, putting your co-workers at risk. Use common sense and stay at home if you have obvious cold and flu symptoms. The general rule is to stay at home for at least 24 hours until the symptoms subside.

Remember: sometimes all your body needs is rest and time to heal.

Visit the TWU Health & Safety webpage at www.twu-canada.ca/safety/english.shtml.

TWU National Health & Safety Committee