

WORKPLACE HYGIENE

What you need to know

INTRODUCTION

Most people have a pretty clear idea of what's good for them and what's not.

We all want to eat healthily; get plenty of exercise and not give into bad habits.

But it's not always that easy, especially when at work.

You can probably remember a time when you grabbed a chocolate bar from the vending machine, even though you knew an apple was better for you...

Why do we so often make decisions that aren't really the best choices for us?

When we're busy at work, it can be easy to prioritise workload over wellbeing and you might feel like it's difficult to maintain a healthy lifestyle when on the job.

But given most of our waking hours are spent in the workplace, what we do during those hours has a big impact on our overall health.

So let's focus on some of the daily choices you can make that can help your work life be happier, healthier and more productive.

WORKPLACE HYGIENE

Say some under the weather person at your workplace coughed into their palm and then touched a doorknob. Beginning with that one contaminated object, how long would it take for the virus to run rampant through the building?

Would it be a day?

Eight hours?

The answer is frighteningly quick!

From the instant those unsanitary fingers touch the knob, it could be just 2 to 4 hours before the contamination has spread to 60% of surfaces, as well as your co-workers.

Wherever you are working, maintaining workplace hygiene is a must.

Before you run off to wash your hands – let's take a look at some simple ways you can keep your own workplace clean and hygienic, and avoid those germs.

RULE 1 – WASH YOUR HANDS

The best way to fight germs at work is to wash your hands.

Be sure to use proper hand-washing technique. A quick rinse under the cold water isn't good enough. Use soap and warm water, and spend at least 15 to 20 seconds washing your hands – paying particular attention to under your nails and wash all the way up to your wrists.

If you can't get to a sink, stash some hand sanitiser in your desk draw!

RULE 2 – CATCH IT. KILL IT. BIN IT.

In the workplace it's not uncommon to mix with co-workers who are coughing and sneezing claiming to be "coming down with something". The chances are – you're next.

It's unpleasant to think about, but when you're face to face with someone with a contagious illness, it's the droplets from their mouth or nose ending up in yours that's the root of the problem.

It might sound like common sense – but remember to cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Throw the tissue in the bin and use hand sanitiser to clean your hands.

RULE 3 – STAY HOME

You need to stay home if you're ill. Even though attendance is important, your co-workers don't want to catch the flu or whatever bug you're carrying.

By staying at home you also give your body a chance to recuperate sooner.

Protect your co-workers by staying home if you're sick.

FINAL SUMMARY

You now have the tools and information to make some simple adjustments that will help you break any bad work routines and start enjoying a healthy life at work.

However, we do recognise that sometimes factors specific to your workplace, or even outside work, that affect your ability to do your job well can lead to physical and mental health concerns.

The best thing you can do is talk to somebody early on, be it your manager, colleague or HR department, and get the support you need.

The Health and Wellbeing policy is in place to protect and support you whilst at work. So why not set some time aside to read and understand the policy.

Be active, be healthy and be happy at work.

DECLARATION

I have read and understood my employee responsibilities outlined in the Health and Wellbeing policy:

Name

Date