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benefitness for you.

Take Precautions to Stop Spread of Germs

Winter has begun, and so has the spread of germs caused by the common cold and the flu. According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adults catch an average of two to three colds per year, and children catch even more. Taking simple precautions to prevent germs being spread can help keep you healthy, as well as those around you.

The most effective way to prevent the spread of germs is by frequent hand washing. Use soap (preferably liquid) and running water to wash your hands for at least twenty seconds before eating or cooking food, after using the restroom, and before and after being near sick people. In addition, if you or others in your home are already sick, replace hand towels with paper towels.

When coughing and sneezing, don't cover your mouth with your hands. Instead, use a tissue and throw it away immediately... or if you do not have tissues handy, sneeze into your elbow. Be sure to cover your nose and mouth entirely. Moving away from others before coughing and sneezing also helps prevent those around you from getting sick.

Other common precautions: Keep hand sanitizer with you, avoid touching your face, and live a healthy lifestyle, as eating nutritious food and exercising regularly will help boost your immune system. Also, don't wait until you are already sick to be proactive in stopping the spread of germs. And if your cold or flu symptoms persist, visit your family doctor.

In the Workplace, Practice Germ Prevention

Be kind to coworkers and follow these additional tips.

- Stay home when you are sick. It will help you feel better and prevent others from catching your cold!

- Wipe down your desk, phone, and computer with disinfecting wipes reguarly whether you are sick ot not.

- Keep hand sanitizer at your desk. Use it before and after using shared office supplies.

- Avoid sharing pens, snacks, phones, and anything else you touch frequently during the day.

- Work only at your own desk if you or others in the office are sick. This will help keep your germs contained.

- If you aren't feeling well, keep some distance from your coworkers, especially if you need to cough or sneeze.

SOURCES: CDC, Total Wellness, WebMD

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