

Preparing for winter colds and flus

BACK TO BASICS

Autumn heralds cooler nights and days, the comforting aroma of winter soups, more time spent inside close to others keeping warm, and increasing numbers of us off work and school with colds and flus. Thus, it is time to remind ourselves of our responsibilities in caring for ourselves and those close to us. As individuals we all have a role in preventing the spread of infections.

RULES TO BETTER MANAGE INFECTIONS:

1. Stay home when you are unwell – this will aid your recovery and minimise the spread of infection. Schools do not have the facilities or staff to care for unwell children ... please keep them home ... have you updated your contact details at school?
2. Drink plenty of water – especially when unwell.
3. Tell another adult you are unwell – ask them to check on you frequently.
4. Seek your doctor's guidance if condition persists, or if more than usually concerned.
5. Hand washing! Careful hand washing is the easiest way to prevent infections spreading.
6. Blow your nose into a disposable tissue, and wash your hands.

HANDWASHING

Good hand washing has been found to be the most simple and effective way to prevent the spread of infectious diseases such as colds and flu as well as Meningitis and Hepatitis.

Children need to be taught and encouraged to wash their hands:

- After blowing nose or coughing into their hand
- Before and after eating
- After using the toilet
- After playing with animals
- Any time they look dirty!

The correct way to wash hands:

- Wet hands and apply soap.
- Run hands together over all surfaces, especially between fingers and back of hands.
- Do this for 20 seconds.
- Children can be taught to sing a tune to themselves eg Happy Birthday, to encourage to wash for the time needed.
- Rinse well and dry for 20 seconds.

Children should be taught to cover their coughs and sneezes, preferably with a tissue.

HOW TO BLOW YOUR NOSE

PARENTS – Nose blowing can improve hearing!

How to Blow:

- Breathe in through your mouth
- Close lips tightly
- Blow out nose firmly into your tissue
- Put your tissue in the bin

2-3 blows may not be enough, when you blow your nose it is best to blow 5-6 times.

When to Blow:

- when your nose is blocked or runny
- when you get up in the morning
- while you are at school/pre-school
- when you get home
- before you go to bed

DO NOT SQUEEZE WHEN BLOWING AND DO NOT SNIFF. DON'T FORGET TO WASH YOUR HANDS AFTER BLOWING.

Blowing your nose can help stop ear infections.

Encourage them to sneeze or cough into their elbow if no tissue is available, this helps to avoid spread of germs.