

## Winter Sickness

### **Please Stay Home When Sick—Check With A Health Care Provider When Needed**

#### Here's a look at What's Going Around...

**Flu:** Symptoms include fever, chills, and aches. The onset is sudden. Usually, respiratory symptoms are minimal. There may be mild runny nose or cough.

**Stomach Bug:** Symptoms include nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, also known as acute gastroenteritis. The most common cause is viral (most commonly is the Norovirus). Viral gastroenteritis usually lasts two to three days, but can last as long as seven days. The best thing to do if you have acute viral gastroenteritis is to **stay home**, as it does spread easily from person to person. Hand washing and avoiding close contact are important to prevent spreading of the illness. The symptoms usually resolve without treatment in two to three days, but it is important to stay hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids.

#### How Germs Spread

Illnesses like the flu (influenza) and colds are caused by viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. The flu and colds usually spread from person to person when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

#### How to Help Stop the Spread of Germs

**Cover Your Mouth and Nose When You Sneeze or Cough:** Cough or sneeze into a tissue and then throw it away. Cover your cough or sneeze if you do not have a tissue. Then, clean your hands, and do so every time you cough or sneeze.

**Clean your Hands Often:** When available, wash your hands—with soap and warm water—then rub your hands vigorously together and scrub all surfaces. Wash for 15 to 20 seconds. It is the soap combined with the scrubbing action that helps dislodge and remove germs. When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers may be used. You can find them in most supermarkets and drugstores. If using a gel, rub the gel in your hands until they are dry. The gel doesn't need water to work; the alcohol in the gel kills germs that cause colds and the flu.\*

**Avoid Touching Your Eyes, Nose, or Mouth:** Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches their eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs can live for a long time (some can live for 2 hours or more) on surfaces like doorknobs, desks, and tables.

**Practice Other Good Health Habits:** Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food. Practicing healthy habits will help you stay healthy during flu season and all year long.

Source: WELCOA

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**“All employees are required to be vaccinated against influenza, inertia, pessimism, disloyalty and ennui.”**