

INFLUENZA - BASIC HYGIENE PRECAUTIONS

Current concerns regarding the global occurrence of swine flu have highlighted the need to observe basic hygiene precautions to help prevent the transmission of influenza-type illnesses.

The following are simple steps that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like influenza. Symptoms of the flu may include fever, cough, runny nose, headache, limb/joint pain and vomiting and diarrhoea. The advice from the Public Health Agency is that preventing the spread of germs is the single most effective way to slow the spread of diseases like pandemic flu.

You can protect yourself and your family by ensuring everyone washes their hands regularly with soap and water, and by cleaning surfaces regularly.

You can prevent a virus spreading to others by:

- Always carrying tissues
- Using tissues to cover your mouth and nose when you cough and sneeze
- Binning the tissues as soon as possible
- Washing your hands regularly
- Minimise touching of the mouth, eyes and/or nose.

For those who have symptoms

- Not to come into work if you think you have flu and not to return until your symptoms have Stopped.
- If you become unwell at work inform your manager and leave for home.
- Contact your GP by telephone and seek advice.
- If you are returning from a flu-affected area and you have symptoms of a flu-like illness you should stay at home and telephone your doctor stating your symptoms and recent travel history.

Sources of further advice:

www.nidirect.gov.uk

www.publichealth.hscni.net

Northern Ireland Helpline for Swine Flu (from 30 April 2009)

Tel: 0800 0514 142

