

# Cold and flu prevention in the workplace

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## Tips for employers



1. Cold and flu season in Australia is May–September. Encourage employees to get a flu shot to protect them from influenza infection. Vaccinations are most effective when administered before the cold and flu season starts.
2. Cold and flu are highly contagious and spread when infected individuals cough and sneeze – provide information about how cold and flu are spread and prevention strategies.
3. Encourage employees to go home immediately if they begin to feel sick at work and stay away from work if they are ill and/or contagious.
4. Create facilities for remote meetings and teleconferencing.
5. Encourage visitors to stay away if they are ill or wear personal protective equipment such as face masks if staying away is not an option.
6. Ensure the workplace has a good supply of hygiene products to help prevent the spread of cold and flu – these include tissues, dust bins, soap, disposable wipes and disinfectant hand gel.
7. Encourage employees to stay healthy by eating a balanced diet, exercising every day, getting enough rest and avoiding dangerous substances like tobacco and alcohol.
8. Encourage employees to wash their hands regularly throughout the day and after coughing or sneezing.
9. Encourage employees to practise good cough and sneeze etiquette by covering their mouth or nose when coughing or sneezing (preferably with a tissue which is disposed of immediately) and washing their hands afterwards.
10. Encourage employees to keep surfaces and equipment clean and free of cold and flu germs by wiping them regularly with disinfectant wipes. This is particularly important for shared equipment like telephones and keyboards.
11. Hang signs around the office to remind employees to stay away when they are sick and practise hygiene measures like hand washing and good cough and sneeze etiquette to prevent cold and flu transmission.