



Protection against infection (respiratory tract)

1 Background

The department of health www.Bundesgesundheitsministerium.de is responsible for the assessment of infectious diseases and issues the corresponding warnings and recommendations. It develops plans in case of an epidemic or pandemic and encourages companies to do the same. The scientific work is done by the Robert-Koch-Institut www.rki.de. Frequently asked questions are already answered online here. The aim is to slow down the spreading of the infection. The website of the technical authority offers suggestions for protection BZgA: www.infektionsschutz.de.

2 Implementation (list of possibilities)

The best protection is the strengthening of the body's own immune system, for instance through vaccines. The immune system is promoted by a healthy lifestyle, e.g. balanced diet with vitamins, outdoor exercise, positive experiences, sleep and a positive outlook - while alcohol, nicotine, stress and brooding weaken the immune system.

You can preventively **reduce contact with viruses**:

- avoid shaking hands
- reduce skin contact, touch clothing instead
- review the necessity of group events and look for alternatives - especially interregional meetings, e.g. by conference call
- avoid touching keyboards, door handles
- spend more time outdoors, e.g. meetings whilst walking
- during communion, use individual cups instead of a chalice
- serve out meals, instead of using common serving spoons
- providing food with spit protection

The number of **viruses can be reduced** by:

- thoroughly **washing your hands** with soap and water (approx. 20 seconds)
- intensive **air interchange**
- **cleaning the door handles**, door bells, keyboards - if necessary, several times a day
- provide a **disinfectant dispenser**, preferably with a sensor or with an arm lever (do not forget to clean the soap dispenser and disinfection container itself).
But **do not use spray bottles**, as the disinfectant can harm the lungs!
- **do not share towels** or personal utensils with others – use preferably linen towels instead of terry cloth, label towels with users' name.
- a **face mask** is useful for a short time if there is direct contact with infected people.

Potentially infected people should avoid contact with **risk groups**, such as pregnant women, small children, the elderly and weakened people. Information: communicate your interventions (e.g. regular disinfection of the handles) and give advice on how the individual can contribute to protection: e.g. "touch hands less – and hearts more!", "wash hands more often to protect each other"

A church congregation recently distributed chocolate sweets instead of shaking hands at the entrance.

Your specialist for occupational safety

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