COVID 19 - Workplace - Respiratory Etiquette

According to the American Lung Association, sneezes and coughs are effective ways to get rid of foreign invaders in our bodies, like germs and pollen, but they can also spread infections when not covered up.

Did you know that a cough can travel as fast as 80 kilometers per hour and expels almost 3,000 droplets? A sneeze can travel up to 160 kilometers per hour and create upwards of 100,000 droplets.

Respiratory etiquette goes a long way to prevent illness from spreading through direct and indirect contact from droplets on surfaces, through the air, and cross-contamination with food or water.

Stop the spread! It’s as easy as sneezing or coughing into your sleeve.

Here’s Cassandra and Joanne to show us how. Notice Joanne’s left-handed manoeuvre, while Cassandra effectively uses her right elbow. Even droplets from this big sneeze are stopped in their tracks, as Joanne makes sure her nose and mouth are deep in the fabric.

The best way to catch and dispose of germ-filled droplets is with a tissue. Sneeze or cough into the tissue, blow, hold and wipe, and toss it into the trash. Remember to always wash your hands or use alcohol rub after using a tissue.

Educate your staff about respiratory etiquette, share videos with them on how to cover up coughs and sneezes. Make sure there are posters up around the office. Provide information at meetings, through newsletters, on the company intranet, and through the Health and Safety Committee. Provide tissues, hand sanitizer, and handwashing areas for your staff, clients and visitors.

Good respiratory etiquette can stop the spread of germs.

Have questions? Contact the Haliburton-Kawartha-Pine Ridge District Health Unit at 1-866-888-4577 extension 5020, online at [www.hkpr.on.ca](http://www.hkpr.on.ca) or by e-mail [info@hkpr.on.ca](mailto:info@hkpr.on.ca).