Personal Hygiene Meeting Kit

WHAT’S AT STAKE

Workers who pay attention to personal hygiene can prevent the spread of germs and disease, reduce their exposures to chemicals and contaminants, and avoid developing skin allergies, skin conditions, and chemical sensitivities.

WHAT’S THE DANGER

BAD HYGIENE – TWO CATEGORIES (PERSONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE)

Poor personal hygiene:

- not showering often
- not brushing teeth
- not washing hands before or after handling food
- not washing hands after using the toilet

Poor environmental hygiene:

- not regularly cleaning the kitchen and bathroom
- leaving garbage sitting out
- not cooking or storing food properly
- not doing laundry often (clothing and sheets)

SIGNS OF BAD HYGIENE

- body odor from not showering regularly
- unwashed or disheveled hair
- bad breath, food between teeth, or signs of tooth decay and gingivitis
- wearing soiled clothing
- dirty and untrimmed fingernails and toenails

HYGIENE-RELATED DISEASES

- Athlete’s Foot (tinea pedis)
- Body Lice

- Chronic Diarrhea
- Dental Caries (Tooth Decay)
- Head Lice
- Hot Tub Rash
- Lymphatic Filariasis
- Pinworms
- Pubic Lice (“Crabs”)
- Scabies
- Swimmer’s Ear (otitis externa)
- Trachoma
- Recreational Water Illnesses
- Acanthamoeba keratitis (AK)
- Ringworm

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

PERSONAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT

Hand Washing. Basic hand washing and skin care can prevent work exposures and disease. Good washing and scrubbing with water and soap helps to remove germs, contaminants, and chemicals.

Hand washing involves more than a quick rinse under a faucet. To wash hands properly, workers should first wet them under the faucet and then use liquid or bar soap. Hands should be held out of the water until all skin surfaces are scrubbed and lathered for at least twenty seconds. Workers can then rinse with clean water and dry their hands with a disposable towel. To wash hands with a hand sanitizer, workers should apply the appropriate amount of sanitizer into the palm of the hand, and then rub hands together until they are dry, being careful to cover all surfaces of the hands. For some job activities, hand sanitizers are not an acceptable means of hand cleaning.

Wash daily. Shower or bath every day and use soap or a body wash to make sure you are clean and to remove germs from your body. After you have washed, apply deodorant in order to stop any body odours from developing. If you perspire easily, think about techniques to manage this during the day.

Have clean hair. Wash your hair regularly with shampoo and ensure you brush it at least once a day to ensure it is kept neat and tidy. If you work in the hospitality industry or around food/drink, make sure your hair is tied up and wear a hair net if necessary.

Wear clean clothing. Make sure you wash your clothing regularly and wear fresh, clean clothes to work each day. Make sure your clothes are presentable, this means they should be ironed and free from holes wherever possible. Crumpled, old and smelly clothes are never welcomed in the workplace!

Keep your nails clean. Make sure your nails are clean and kept tidily cut. It is important that you always wash your hands after you have visited the toilet, and regularly throughout the day. There are a number of work environments where you should not wear nail polish or jewellery (such as in kitchens and hospitals), so make sure you know your company's policies.

Oral hygiene. Brush your teeth every morning as part of your daily grooming routine to help reduce the risk of tooth decay, oral diseases, and bad breath. You should use a good toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste, making sure you brush for at least 2 minutes, making sure you reach all surfaces of all teeth.

IMPORTANCE OF WORKPLACE HYGIENE AND PERSONAL HYGIENE AT WORK

Employee Responsibility

Much responsibility lies with employees to maintain it as it a clean workplace.

Every employee should be responsible for cleaning their own space, and this should be laid out in the policy. Then, place posters around the workplace to remind them, such as handwashing posters in the bathroom.

If employees undertake this responsibility seriously, then the risk of infection will be reduced. Employees should:

- Clean up after themselves

- Wash any cups/mugs daily
- Wash hands after using the washroom
- Use sanitisers throughout the day
- Regularly wipe down their workstation
- Proper haircut and hairstyle.
- Polished shoes.
- Use of a deodorant.

Self-hygiene greatly enhances the value of a person. A clean workplace ensures good health of the employees, and they are less prone to contagious diseases.

FINAL WORD

All workplace environments need to be hygienic and safe for both employees and visitors. This applies to all, not just workplaces involved in handling food and personal products. A solid workplace hygiene policy is the best way to ensure employees maintain a clean workplace.