

# CORONAVIRUS FACT SHEET

## FACT SHEET 3 – PERSONAL HYGIENE

### ***How is Coronavirus transmitted?***

Coronavirus is most likely to spread from person-to-person through:

- direct close contact with a person while they are infectious
- close contact with a person with a confirmed infection who coughs or sneezes, or
- touching objects or surfaces (such as door handles or tables) contaminated from a cough or sneeze from a person with a confirmed infection, and then touching your mouth or face.

Most infections are only transmitted by people when they have symptoms. These can include fever, a cough, sore throat, tiredness and shortness of breath.

### ***Prevention of spread of Coronavirus***

Probably the most important weapon in the prevention of any illness spreading is personal hygiene, with correct hand washing topping the list of preventative measures.

Ensure that adequate hand-washing facilities are available, including supply of anti-bacterial soap (dispenser is preferred to minimise risk of cross-infection) and paper towels to dry hands. Suitable signs to remind people of the need to wash hands should be posted in areas such as kitchens, meal rooms, change rooms and toilets, etc, as a constant reminder of this critical step.

### ***Cough etiquette***

Covering of coughs and sneezes should be encouraged at all times to minimise risk of spread of the virus by airborne transmission. Persons with a cough or sneeze must be reminded of the need for hand-washing before they contact anything which may spread the virus to others.

Persons showing flu-like symptoms should sneeze or cough into their elbows and not their hands, and use single-use tissues and wash their hands. Employees who share equipment such as phones or laptops should wipe down the equipment with a sanitising wipe after use.

### ***Wash your hands***

**This simple step is vital in the prevention of Coronavirus spreading.**

Get into the habit of washing and drying your hands often. Use soap and warm water (if available) and dry your hands with a paper towel. Hand sanitiser is useful if hand washing is impractical.

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### ***Should people wear surgical masks?***

Surgical face masks are designed to protect others from airborne droplets that the mask wearer may produce. They do not seal tightly to the face and are not designed to filter particulates from the air breathed in.

Surgical masks are only helpful in preventing Coronavirus spreading to others from people who develop symptoms as a result of infection with the virus. If you are a casual contact and subsequently become ill, you should put on a surgical mask to prevent spreading infections to others. You will be given a surgical mask by your doctor when you are initially assessed.

If you remain well, you are not required to wear a surgical mask as there is little evidence supporting the widespread use of surgical masks in healthy people to prevent transmission of Coronavirus.