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Clean Living at Work

The workplace has its share of germs! A 2002 study conducted by University of Arizona researchers found that the workplace does indeed host its share of germs: phones have up to 25,127 germs per square inch, keyboards 3,295 per square inch and computer mice 1,676 per square inch. Mindful of this fact, the American Cleaning Institute offers employers and employees several tips to help keep healthy at the workplace.

Hands-On Tips for Employees:

- Routinely wash your hands with soap as soon as you arrive at the office and several times throughout the day, including before and after lunch, after using the restroom, and in between meetings. Wash your hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds.
- Because germs can be transmitted from virtually anything you come in contact with, keep a surface cleaner or disinfecting spray or wipes handy for daily wipe-down of the two most common items you touch each day, your desktop and telephone. Some products are designed to kill the germs that lead to cold and flu suffering — read the product label to be sure.
- Clean your office and restroom doorknobs regularly. Wipes are great for this task.
- Use a disinfectant spray in your office garbage can. Has it ever been disinfected?
- Subway, bus or train commuters should carry (and use) a hand sanitizer or antibacterial hand wipes following their commutes. This can prevent germ transmission when you stop to get your morning coffee or breakfast.
- If you're sick, stay home!

When to Wash Hands at the Workplace

- Each time you use the restroom
- Before and after staff meetings if food is served
- After scanning newspapers or magazines in your break room
- Before and after your lunch
- After using your friend's keyboard or tools
- Before and after a meet and greet activity in your office
- When using shared office equipment like faxes, phones, etc.



Handwashing Steps

1. Wet hands with clean, running water (warm or cold) and apply soap, either in bar or liquid form.
2. Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub them well; be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails. Do this away from running water, so the lather isn't washed away.
3. Continue rubbing your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

If soap and water are not available, consider using a hand wipe or hand sanitizer to clean your hands!