

## **GENERAL HEALTH & WELLBEING**

### **TOPIC 1:**

### **ILLNESS PREVENTION & HYGIENE**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Good hygiene practices and basic common sense precautions will help prevent the spread of infectious illnesses such as the common cold and food poisoning.

#### **WASHING & HAND HYGIENE**

- Wash and disinfect your hands thoroughly with soap and water frequently after using the bathroom, after handling raw meat or produce, before handling any food and before eating food. This will help to kill most, if not all, bacteria and viruses that can cause illness.
- Clean your hands after contact with an unwell individual who may have an infectious illness, for example after shaking hands. The use of alcohol hand gel, which can be purchased in small handy bottles, can be helpful in this respect. On a social note, please take care to make this action subtle otherwise it may unintentionally cause offense!

#### **COOKING FOOD**

- If you are preparing food, prevent cross contamination by separating raw and cooked food.
- Wash produce thoroughly and disinfect food contact surfaces and equipment used in preparing food.
- Store food at the temperature recommended on the food label.
- Do not consume out of date food/ drinks/ medication.

## WATER CONSUMPTION

- Avoid unsafe water. Always make sure that the water you are using for cooking and cleaning is safe and potable (drinkable). This is less of a risk in the UK where water standards are highly regulated and most tap water is potable.
- This can be a major issue in other countries where water standards are not as rigorously regulated. In these scenarios, ensure the water has been boiled and cooled before drinking.

## FLU VACCINATION

- During the winter months, consider getting an influenza vaccination ('flu jab') to prevent against the complications of influenza (the flu), especially if you have longstanding illness such as asthma or diabetes.
- These flu jabs are usually available from your GP or selected pharmacists November to January every year. Although symptoms of colds and flu can be similar, the two are different.
- Yearly vaccination can help protect you from getting the flu but the strains of flu change every year so the flu jab needs to be administered annually.

*Key phrases: illness prevention, hand hygiene, flu jab, food preparation.*

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

### **VIDEOS-**

### **COUGHS.**

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/winterhealth/Pages/Winterhealthrisks.aspx>

### **HOME HYGIENE SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE.**

<http://www.nhs.uk/Tools/Pages/Healthyhome.aspx>