

Germ defense! A cold and flu awareness campaign for employees

A toolkit for giving employees better strategies for fighting colds and the flu



A workplace priority: Helping employees stay healthy during the cold and flu season

Viruses cause both the common cold and influenza (the flu). You can't see these microscopic germs, but your business can feel their effects. Statistics from the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that cold and flu season costs companies tens of billions of dollars in healthcare costs and hundreds of millions of dollars in sick days and lost productivity.¹ Worse, annual epidemics cause about 3 to 5 million cases of severe illness, and about 290,000 to 650,000 respiratory deaths.²

There are far too many misconceptions about both diseases. Employee education has the potential to make a tremendous difference in the health of your workforce and in controlling healthcare costs.

That's why MetLife developed the *Germ defense!* campaign. It's an education and awareness campaign for helping your employees mount a better defense against these nasty germs.

What's in the toolkit?

- Campaign objectives
- Suggested timeline
- Marketing materials (articles, email campaign, flyers, etc.)

Staying healthy during the cold and flu season is even more important during the coronavirus pandemic. However, please note that while there are some similarities between the flu and COVID-19 (the illness caused by the coronavirus) in terms of symptoms, transmission and prevention, this toolkit is not intended to include information on COVID-19. Other resources are available on COVID-19. For the most up-to-date COVID-19 information and recommendations, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> and the World Health Organization website at <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>.

1. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Make It Your Business To Fight The Flu," 2019

2. World Health Organization, "Fact Sheet: Influenza (Seasonal)," November 2018

Campaign objectives

- Raise awareness of the importance of preventing colds and flus
- Educate employees on taking the most effective measures to avoid catching colds or coming down with the flu, or to recover faster if infected
- Encourage employees to adopt better workplace habits to limit the spread of germs

Suggested timeline

The campaign is designed to last a minimum of three weeks but can be extended to four weeks. The emails noted are core items of the campaign, as sending these out may increase employee engagement and enthusiasm.

Week 1 Email Protect yourself during the cold and flu season

Week 2-3 Email Avoid cold and flu germs in the workplace

In addition to the email pushes, we strongly recommend an onsite event to kick off the campaign. The event can be small, but it can be used as an important opportunity to provide the educational handouts to employees and build awareness.

Marketing materials

1. Email campaign

- Banner
- Email templates

2. Flyers

- 10 flu myths
- Staying healthy and feeling better faster

3. Short articles

- Know the difference between colds and the flu
- When and why the flu spreads so fast
- Five common questions about cold and flu season

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