



Stop Workplace Computer Viruses: *Use Hand Sanitizer!*

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Have head colds spread through your office this year? Worse yet, how about that awful “stomach flu?”

The viruses that cause these miseries easily pass among workers who share office equipment—touch pads and keyboards on scanners, faxes, printers, tablets, and computers. You can’t stop these “computer viruses” by calling the Help Desk. Instead, help your desks by equipping them with hand sanitizer. Make 2012 “The Year of the Sanitizer” where you work!

Alcohol-based hand sanitizer gels effectively reduced workplace colds and coughs in a recent research study. Participants received a 500 ml bottle of gel delivered to their desk, with instructions to cleanse their hands with it five times a day. Compared to workers at a different office not given this intervention, the hand-cleansing group had 55 percent fewer coughs, and 60 percent fewer colds and fevers during the course of a year. The sanitizer users also had significantly less work absence from respiratory illness and from diarrhea (Hubner, 2010).



Soap and water hand washing remains the time-honored cornerstone of good hygiene. These researchers of course still asked people in both groups to continue that habit. The study participants enjoyed better health because of the added convenience the gels offered.

In just seconds, without leaving your computer, you too can kill pesky viruses by the millions. And, other studies have found hand sanitizers remove rhinovirus, a leading cause of colds, even better than soap and water, 80 percent compared to 31 percent (Turner, 2010).

Children live in an even more techno-world than adults, with shared keyboards at school and game controls at home. Remind them to use hand gel at least five times a day—once for each finger. Parents will appreciate this: perfect attendance increased by 20 percent at an elementary school participating in hand gel research, compared to a control setting that did not (Nandrup-Bus, 2011).

At work, school, and home, use computers to spread information—not infections! Pass the sanitizer, please!

References:

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