



## Infection Control

[Infectious diseases](#) can be transferred from one infected person to another and are a significant cause of morbidity and mortality in all communities. Some common infectious diseases include: influenza, chicken pox, gastroenteritis, glandular fever, measles, meningitis, mumps salmonella, streptococcal sore throat and sexually transmitted infections such as Chlamydia.

### Implications for health and wellbeing

Different diseases have different causes, symptoms, [health implications](#) and treatments.

The spread of infectious diseases can be prevented by:

- regular hand-washing especially after using the toilet and before preparing or eating food
- covering coughs and sneezes and washing hands or using antibacterial gels
- staying away from work if unwell well with an infection illness
- keeping immunisation up to date

### In the workplace

Outbreaks of infectious diseases, like the flu (influenza) and stomach bugs (gastroenteritis) are common in workplaces as large groups often share the same space, surfaces and resources. It is important for workplaces to promote good infection control strategies to

help prevent the spread and impact of illness amongst their workforce, as well as other visitors to the workplace e.g. contractors and family members. As part of this, a staff member who is unwell should be encouraged to stay away from the workplace until they are no longer infectious.

## Immunisation

[Immunisation](#) can prevent a wide range of serious infectious diseases. It is one of the most extensively researched areas of medicine and, along with drinking water, has proved to be the most valuable health care measure ever developed by saving millions of lives worldwide.

### Implications for health and wellbeing

Immunisation is one of the most cost-effective means of preventing disease and improving health. [Problems associated with immunisation](#) are very rare. Occasionally individuals may experience mild side-effects such as redness and soreness and fever.

Influenza vaccine is available free to adults aged over 65, pregnant women and adults with [certain medical conditions](#). Many employers offer free annual influenza vaccination for all their staff. Annual influenza immunisation is required to ensure protection from the most recent strains of the flu virus.

### In the workplace

Encouraging employees to practice good personal hygiene and keep themselves and their families up to date with immunisations can help reduce sick leave taken due to infectious



# Infection Control and Immunisation Background Information

[www.workwell.health.nz](http://www.workwell.health.nz)

disease. It will also contribute to better health in the wider community, as the overall spread of infectious disease will be reduced.

[Free immunisation](#) is available from March to July 31st each year for those most at risk of influenza complications, including everyone aged 65 and over, and any adult or child with a chronic medical condition. Free influenza immunisation is also available for [pregnant women](#).

## Key Messages

- Infection control procedures and [immunisation](#) can help prevent the development of disease
- Infectious diseases can spread through workplaces and increase absenteeism
- The workplace can support infection control and immunisation in the workplace by creating a healthy culture and environment

## Incorporating Infection Control and Immunisation into your Workplace

Your efforts to support employees to reduce the spread of infectious disease and create a safe and hygienic working environment should consider a multi-level approach to ensure it is effective and sustainable. A multi-level approach involves considering what is available at each of the following levels:

- Organisational (Policies and procedures)
- Environmental (Infrastructure and facilities)
- Individual (Opportunities, information and training)