

5 cold and flu season tips for parents

If you've been to a museum, library or school in the past few months, you've heard someone say, "It's really going around."

If you are a parent, you don't even need us to explain what "it" is - those nasty germs that seem to run rampant during our Midwest winters. From colds to influenza, sickness spreads fastest this time of year.

For families battling illnesses (or those trying to avoid them), here are a few fast tips.

Wash early and often.

Washing hands is one of the most important ways to prevent the spread of germs. Wondering when you should wash your hands (and the hands of your kids)? Here's a few examples from the CDC:

- Before eating.
- After preparing or handling food.
- After going to the bathroom.
- After touching an animal or its food or toys.
- After changing a diaper.
- After touching your eyes, nose or mouth.



So basically, wash your hands all the time.

And practice the proper hand-washing technique with your kids, including lathering well and washing for about 20 seconds. (Try singing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" while washing.)

Clean and disinfect surfaces.

Many household surfaces are easily contaminated with germs - including bathroom surfaces, kitchen counters and kids' toys.

But also think of more obscure places that are touched often - like light switches, garbage cans, door knobs and drawer pulls. These are all places that need wiped down and disinfected regularly.

Make it fun.

There aren't many people who would say that cold and flu season is fun. But here's a few ways to get kids involved and make it more bearable, especially when preventing the spread of germs.

- Sing songs while washing hands or disinfecting.

now what? Keep Going.

5 cold and flu season tips for parents

- Kids actually love cleaning. Get them involved in wiping down all the surfaces by making it a game.
- Start a hand-washing chart. For each time your kids wash their hands, they get a star on the chart.

When germs hit, stay home.

When your child has the flu or a fever, it's vital that you stay at home for at least 24 hours and until you feel better.

The truth is, germs will spread before you even see symptoms. But it's important to do our best to prevent the spread of germs. That means staying out of public places and staying home from school or work.

Rest up.

For many colds and flus, the best medicine is rest and fluids. (But always check with your doctor for specific treatment options.)

And don't allow your kids (or yourself) to overdo it when you are under the weather. The more you allow rest, the faster you'll get better.

now
what?

KEEP GOING.

To all the caregivers out there: You will get through cold and flu season. You will get through cold and flu season.

Try these tips to keep the germs at bay, and remember that this too shall pass. (Because spring has to come at some point. Right?)

.....

Originally posted on the Now What? Blog 2/10/16. The Now What? Blog served for nearly 7 years to

1. Normalize parents seeking support and help as a manner of child abuse prevention
2. Engage community in how they can work to prevent child abuse
3. Work to build resiliency in families through promotion of the 5 protective factors

Maybe you coach a baseball team or you help care for the neighbor kids from time to time. You are investing in the safety and security of the children in our community. Because it truly does take a village to raise our children, we want to offer the tools needed to bring awareness and education to preventing child abuse.

now what? Keep Going.