



# Cough Etiquette Questions & Answers

## What is cough etiquette?

Cough etiquette is a series of actions to take if you are coughing or sneezing, which are designed to reduce the spread of respiratory illness to others.

## Why is cough etiquette so important?

Colds and flu have the ability to spread easily via the transmission of the germs through the air, carried on droplets. If dispersal of these droplets can be prevented then infection transmission can be reduced. Cough etiquette can help to contain infectious respiratory droplets at the source.

## What do I need to do?

Sneeze, blow your nose or cough into a disposable tissue, and discard the tissue immediately into a bin.

If tissues are not available cough/sneeze into your upper arm or sleeve; avoid using your hands.

Turn away from other people when coughing/sneezing.

Move away from other people who are coughing/sneezing.

Always wash your hands after coughing/sneezing/blowing your nose.

If there is no access to soap and water, an alcohol-based rub may be used.

Try to keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth.

If you have a cold or the flu and visit a healthcare facility or Doctors rooms you may be asked to wait in a separate area and to wear a mask, in order to protect others.

## What's wrong with using a 'hanky'?

Disposable tissues are preferred over cloth handkerchiefs for covering your coughs and sneezes when you have a cold or the flu. This is because a cloth handkerchief can act as a breeding ground for the germs that are causing the infection. Carrying a used handkerchief around when you are sick may spread your germs.

## What if I can't find a bin for my tissues?

If you have to go out when you have a cold or the flu, and you cannot get to a bin to dispose of your used tissues, try carrying a small plastic bag to collect them in until they can be disposed of properly.

## I sneeze a lot from dust and when I have hay fever. Is this a problem too?

Although you may not have an infection at this time it is normal for the nose and mouth to contain come bacteria. Cough etiquette is still a good habit to continue at all times to prevent spreading germs.

**REMEMBER "WASH, WIPE, COVER – DON'T INFECT ANOTHER!"**



**Infection Control Ph: 541 1200 Ext: 311**