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Issue: Hygiene in the Workplace

Many of us spend the majority of our waking hours at work. On average, working Malaysians spend at least nine hours each day at work. When you actually think about it, we spend **more** of our time at work than we do at home! So it's no surprise that many of us can catch colds and the flu bug from colleagues.

To stay healthy at work, it's worth spending some time thinking about the health of your workplace - where harmful germs, as well as other hygiene hazards, are invisible in plain sight.

It is impossible – and unrealistic – to make your work environment completely germ-free. However, there are some basic precautions that you can take to help prevent yourself from falling ill at work.

- Before **and** after preparing food, before **and** after you eat, and after using the toilet, wash your hands with water and antibacterial soap, drying carefully with clean dry towels. The duration of washing hands is also important, 20 seconds being the optimum time. According to the Dettol Global Hygiene Survey 2009 findings only 15% of Malaysians recognised this.
- Practise cough and sneeze etiquette - cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and discard the tissue and wash your hands immediately
- Avoid eating lunch at your desk; if you have to, use a plate, and wipe the desk with antibacterial surface wipes before **and** after eating. Try to avoid using your phone or keyboard while eating, as this could cause cross- contamination
- Carry antibacterial hand-wipes and hand sanitiser for use when you don't have access to soap and water, such as when you are at your desk or on public transport
- Ensure that your desk, especially your keyboard, telephone and mouse is disinfected with an antiseptic liquid solution or disinfectant spray at least once a week to kill bacteria on your desk

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