

Young children are more prone to colds as they haven't built up immunity to fight the many germs causing them. As children get older, they should gradually get fewer colds but what can we do to minimise the spread now?



Here are some reminders for everyone using early childhood settings:

- Maintain effective hand washing routines to avoid the spread of germs. Follow the **cough and sneeze etiquette**
- Keep the environment as clean as possible to help reduce the number of germs and break the chain of infection
- Encourage children not to share plates, cups and cutlery
- Remind parents and carers of your setting's policy on excluding sick children and remind staff to remain at home if they are sick
- If children are sick, they may not be hungry. Make sure they drink plenty of fluids and encourage rest, to aid recovery
- There is no evidence that taking extra Vitamin C will prevent colds but ensuring children eat enough vegetables and fruit each day will provide all nutrients for optimal health
- Let your body stock up on its supply of iron and zinc – both essential in your body's fight against winter flu. Some of the best sources include; red meat for iron and zinc or if you are a vegetarian enjoy legume-based meals, nuts and wholegrains
- The best way to protect ourselves and children from colds is to have a healthy lifestyle – eat a healthy diet, enjoy active play or physical exercise, get adequate sleep and drink plenty of fluids

## Cough and Sneeze Etiquette

**Remember: cover your cough & sneeze to stop the spread of germs**

The correct way to prevent the spread of germs that are carried in droplets is by coughing or sneezing into your inner elbow, or by using a tissue to cover your mouth and nose. Put all tissues in the rubbish bin straight away, and clean your hands with either soap and water or an alcohol-based rub.

Ref: Staying Healthy, 5th edition, Australian Government



So remember, while many of us might catch a cough or cold this winter – we just need to try and minimise how often, speed up our recovery and prevent the spread of the infection!

For more information, see [www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au) or [www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au)