

# Germ defence! A cold and flu awareness campaign for employees

A toolkit for giving employees better strategies for fighting colds and the flu



# A workplace priority: helping employees stay healthy during the cold and flu season

Viruses cause both the common cold and influenza (the flu). You can't see these microscopic germs, but your business can feel their effects. Statistics from the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention indicated that cold and flu season costs companies tens of billions of dollars in health care costs and hundreds of millions of dollars in sick days and lost productivity.<sup>1</sup> Worse, annual epidemics are about 3 to 5 million cases of severe illness, and about 250,000 to 500,000 deaths.<sup>2</sup>

There are far too many misconceptions about both diseases. Employee education has the potential to make a tremendous difference in the health of your workforce and in controlling healthcare costs.

That's why MetLife developed the *Germ defence!* campaign. It's an education and awareness campaign for helping your employees mount a better defence against these nasty germs.

## What's in the toolkit?

- Campaign objectives
- Suggested timeline
- Marketing materials (articles, email campaign, flyers, etc.)

### Campaign objectives

- Raise awareness of the importance of preventing colds and flus
- Educate employees on taking the most effective measures to avoid catching colds or coming down with the flu, or to recover faster if infected
- Encourage employees to adopt better workplace habits to limit the spread of germs

### Suggested timeline

The campaign is designed to last a minimum of 3 weeks but can be extended to 4 weeks. The emails noted are core items of the campaign, as sending these out may increase employee engagement and enthusiasm.

**Week 1 Email**                      Protect yourself during the cold and flu season

**Week 2-3 Email**                  Avoid cold and flu germs in the workplace

In addition to the email pushes, we strongly recommend an onsite event to kick off the campaign. The event can be small, but it can be used as an important opportunity to provide the educational handouts to employees and to build awareness.

### Marketing materials

#### 1. Email campaign

- Banner
- Email templates

#### 2. Flyers

- 10 flu myths
- Staying healthy and feeling better faster

#### 3. Short articles

- Know the difference between colds and the flu
- When and why the flu spreads so fast
- Five common questions about cold and flu season

1. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Make It Your Business To Fight The Flu," 2016

2. World Health Organization, "Fact Sheet: Influenza (Seasonal)," November 2016

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