

Lesson 6

Avoiding Germs to Stay Healthy

Overview

This lesson helps students practice behaviors that will help prevent infectious diseases such as colds and flu. Students share symptoms they have experienced when sick, then read about how germs can be passed from person to person. They brainstorm things they can do to avoid infectious illness, and practice healthy actions they can take to prevent the spread of germs, including handwashing and covering sneezes and coughs. They also discuss the importance of asking for help and telling an adult when they don't feel well.

Time: 50 minutes

Lesson Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. Describe ways that common infectious diseases are transmitted.
2. Describe ways to prevent the spread of germs that cause infectious diseases.
3. Explain how handwashing and covering a cough and sneeze are effective ways to prevent many infectious diseases.
4. Describe the importance of seeking help and treatment for common infectious diseases.

Healthy Behavior Outcomes

PHW-6: Practice behaviors that prevent infectious diseases.

PHW-10: Seek out help for common infectious diseases and chronic diseases and conditions.

National Health Education Standards

Standard 1: Comprehending Concepts

Performance Indicator

1.5.1: Describe the relationship between healthy behaviors and personal health.

Standard 7: Practicing Health-Enhancing Behaviors

Performance Indicator

7.5.3: Demonstrate a variety of behaviors to avoid or reduce health risks.

Materials & Preparation

- Review **Image 6A–E**.
- Review **Keep Away, Germs!** reading sheet and **When Sami Was Sick** activity sheet in the Student Workbook.
- Have crayons or markers available for students.
- Have a small bar or soap and a paper towel for the handwashing demonstration.
- *Optional:* Arrange access to a sink or basin, soap, warm water and paper towels for the demonstration and student practice, if desired.

Teaching Steps

Show Image 6A

Look at this picture. What do you see?

Summarize

These are some kids who look like they aren't feeling well. Their bodies are sending some signals that they are ill. These include having a sore throat, a runny nose or a rash and sneezing and coughing.



Image 6A

Survey

How many of you have ever been sick like this with a cold, the flu or some other illness? How did you know you were ill? How did your body feel?

Allow a few students to briefly share their experiences. Ask questions to engage the entire class as each student shares (e.g., How many of you have also been sick like this? Has anyone else felt this way when you were ill?).

Explain

When you feel sick, your body sends you these signals so you will pay attention and take care of yourself. One of the best ways you can do this is to tell an adult you're feeling sick and ask for help.

Survey

If you felt sick at home, who could help?

If you felt sick at school, who could help?

Summarize

At home, you can ask your parents or guardians, another adult family member or an older brother or sister for help.

At school, you can ask a teacher, the school nurse or even a friend to help. Kids learn better when they feel well. So, if you feel sick here at school, or if you see that someone in class is feeling sick, tell me so I can help.

(Note: Now is a good time to be sure students know where and how to access the school nurse, if your school has one.)

Ask & Discuss

What are some illnesses that you have heard of?

List student responses on the board. Be sure the list includes both infectious (e.g., cold, flu, pneumonia, chicken pox) and noninfectious, or chronic, diseases (e.g., asthma, diabetes, heart disease, cancer).

Summarize

Some of these are illnesses you can catch or get from other people. Some of them are not. Today we're going to talk more about how to protect yourself from the kinds of sickness that can be passed from person to person.

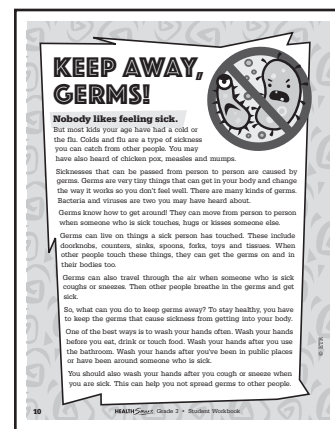
Read

*Have students turn to the **Keep Away, Germs!** reading sheet. Read or have student volunteers read the article aloud.*

Debrief the reading with the following questions.

Ask & Discuss

What are some ways germs can be passed from person to person?



Workbook page 10

Summarize

Germs can be passed when people touch, hug or kiss each other. You can also pick up germs by touching things that someone who is sick has touched, or breathing in germs that are put into the air from coughs and sneezes.

Show Image 6B

Let's review how you can help stop germs and stay healthy.

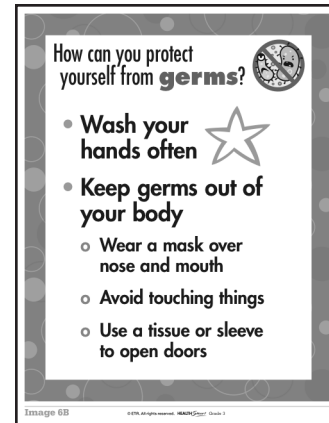


Image 6B

Ask & Discuss

What's one of the most important things you can do to protect yourself from germs?

Summarize

Advance the slide and emphasize handwashing as a means of prevention.

Washing your hands often is one of the best ways to help keep germs away.

Ask & Discuss

In addition to washing your hands, can you think of some other actions you can take to help protect yourself from germs?

Allow students to respond to the question and discuss their ideas.

Summarize

To avoid getting sick, you have to keep the germs that cause illness from getting into your body.

Advance the slide as you summarize prevention behaviors.

- Some people wear a mask over the nose and mouth to avoid breathing in germs from the air when they're around others who are sick.
- You can also try to avoid touching objects or surfaces someone who's sick has touched.
- You might use a tissue or your sleeve to open a door, so you don't touch the doorknob with your bare hand, for example.

But probably the very best way to avoid germs is to wash your hands often.

Show Image 6C

Washing your hands sounds simple, but you need to be sure you do it well and long enough to get rid of germs.

Explain

Follow these steps:

- Wet your hands with water. It helps if the water is warm, but not too hot.
- Lather your hands with soap.
- Scrub each hand with the other for 20 seconds.
- Then rinse your hands with water to remove all the soap.
- Dry your hands with a towel. You can also turn off the water faucet using the towel. This helps keep your “just washed” hands clean.

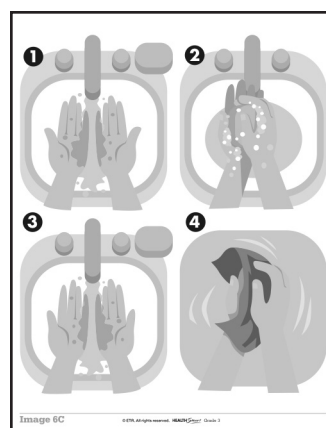


Image 6C

Model

Demonstrate the handwashing process for students using a dry bar of soap and a paper towel, and miming the actions of turning on and off the water faucet. Count to 20 as you scrub your hands to illustrate how long this takes.

(Note: If you have access to sink or basin, you can actually wash your hands with soap and water for the demonstration and allow students to do the same for the practice.)

Practice

Let’s practice the right motions for washing hands.

Allow students to practice the motions for properly washing hands. Observe as students practice and provide corrective feedback, as needed.

Show Image 6D

Sometimes washing your hands and taking other steps to stop germs isn’t enough and you may get sick with a cold or other illness people can catch from each other.



Image 6D

Ask & Discuss

When you're sick what can you do to protect others?

Allow students to respond to the question and discuss their ideas.

Summarize

You can help keep other people from getting sick too if you limit the number of germs you put into the air or on objects.

Advance the slide as you summarize other prevention behaviors.

- Wash your hands often.
- Cover your nose and mouth any time you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching doorknobs, counters, shared toys or anything other people will touch.
- Stay away from public places.
- Stay home from school if you can.



Image 6E

Show Image 6E

We're going to practice one of the best ways to help stop germs and protect others: covering your nose and mouth when you sneeze or cough.

Explain

The best way to cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze is to place your mouth and nose against your inner elbow or sleeve. This way germs don't get on your hands.

You can also cough or sneeze into a tissue, and then be sure to throw the tissue in the trash right away.

Model

Demonstrate the proper way to cover a cough and a sneeze for students by placing the crook of your elbow over your nose and mouth.

Practice

Let's practice covering coughs and sneezes.

Allow students to practice the motions for properly covering a cough or sneeze. Observe as students practice and provide corrective feedback, as needed.

Complete & Share

Now you're going to have a chance to help a third grader like you learn how to avoid spreading germs.

*Have students turn to the **When Sami Was Sick** activity sheet. Read or have student volunteers read the story aloud.*

Go back through the story and underline all the times and ways germs could have been passed. Then answer the questions to share what you've learned with Sami.

Allow time for students to complete the activity sheet. Then call on volunteers to share some of the things they underlined and the advice they would give Sami in response to each of the questions.

Name _____


When Sami Was Sick

Directions: Read the story and underline all the times and ways germs could have been passed. Then answer the questions.

Sami woke up with a sore throat and itchy nose. Sami didn't feel bad enough to stay in bed, but still sneezed five times while getting dressed. After eating breakfast, Sami left the bowl and spoon in the sink, then went out to wait for the school bus. Sami's friend Perry was there and they gave each other a "high five." Sami felt a little dizzy so held on to the handrail while getting on the bus.

At school, Sami couldn't seem to stop sneezing in class. The teacher gave Sami some tissues to use. One of them dropped on the floor when Sami stood up to go to lunch.

Sami ate lunch with a few friends. One friend had some chips and shared them with the group. Sami ate some of the chips too. By the time school let out Sami had started to cough. Sami rode the school bus home feeling much worse than that morning.



1. What are some things Sami could have done to keep germs from spreading?

2. What are two of the best ways Sami could help keep others from getting sick?

3. What should Sami do if the sick feelings keep getting worse?

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Workbook page 11

Close

You may not always be able to avoid getting sick. But the things you've learned and practiced today can all help you stop germs to keep yourself and others healthy.

Assessment Evidence

Students:

1. Described ways that common infectious diseases are transmitted by:
 - Completing the **When Sami Was Sick** activity sheet.
2. Described ways to prevent the spread of germs that cause infectious diseases by:
 - Completing the **When Sami Was Sick** activity sheet.
3. Explained how handwashing and covering a cough and sneeze are effective ways to prevent many infectious diseases by:
 - Completing the **When Sami Was Sick** activity sheet.
4. Described the importance of seeking help and treatment for common infectious diseases by:
 - Completing the **When Sami Was Sick** activity sheet.