In addition to protecting yourself against COVID-19, it’s also critical to take precautions to avoid other illnesses—especially during flu season. While viruses can circulate year-round, flu activity tends to surge in the fall and winter months. During this time, there are several measures that you can implement to keep both yourself and others safe and healthy at work. Consider these best practices from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration amid flu season:

- **Stay home if you feel sick.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests that individuals who have fevers or respiratory symptoms stay home until their conditions improve. Those who experience a fever should hold off on returning to work for another 24 hours after their fever ends (100 degrees Fahrenheit or lower) without the use of medication. Yet, keep in mind that not everyone who has the flu will get a fever. Other symptoms may include a runny nose, body aches, headache, fatigue, diarrhea or vomiting.

- **Wash your hands often.** When using soap and water, rub your soapy hands together for at least 20 seconds before rinsing them with water and drying them completely. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer until you are able to wash your hands.

- **Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue.** Tissues should go into a “no-touch” wastebasket after you use them. Additionally, be sure to wash your hands after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose. Refrain from touching your face.

- **Keep frequently touched surfaces clean.** Commonly used surfaces—such as counters, door handles, phones, computer keyboards and touchpads—should be cleaned between each use.

- **Limit shared equipment, or clean equipment before others use it.** Avoid using a co-worker’s phone, desk, office, computer, or other equipment unless it’s cleaned with a disinfectant approved by the Environmental Protection Agency.

- **Follow workplace protocols.** Make sure you understand specific workplace policies and procedures regarding how to stay healthy on the job during flu season.

- **Discuss alternate work arrangements.** If you’re concerned about your health, speak to your supervisor about alternate work arrangements—such as remote work or staggered shifts—to protect yourself or co-workers who are considered high risk for seasonal flu (e.g., older workers, pregnant women, and employees with asthma).

For more information, please contact us at 1-800-638-8048 or OHS@NFP.com.