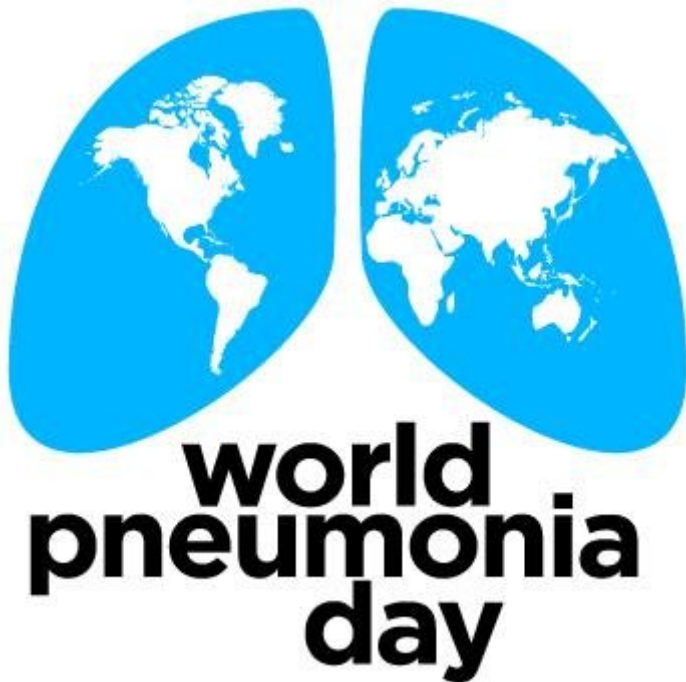




Hand hygiene to prevent pneumonia in the workplace [1]



Hand Hygiene

The workplace can be one of the worst places for germs to be spread if hygiene standards are not maintained. This can lead to increased risk of infections, which can result in staff having to take sick days, reducing the productivity of the business.

World Pneumonia Day takes place annually on the 12th November and Citron Hygiene are supporting this event by raising awareness about the importance of improving workplace hygiene to prevent people from contracting pneumonia.

What is Pneumonia?

Pneumonia is an inflammation of the lungs caused either by a bacterial or viral infection. It can lead to respiratory problems, increased heart rate, fever, chest pain and a general feeling of sickness. Pneumonia most commonly results from coming into contact with bacteria called *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, but there are other types of bacteria and fungi which can also cause the infection.

World Pneumonia Day 2018

World Pneumonia Day aims to raise awareness about the threat of pneumonia and how action can be taken to prevent it. Around the world pneumonia is one of the leading causes of death in children under the age of 5 years, despite it being preventable and treatable. People living in some of the poorest countries in the world are at greatest risk from pneumonia due to a lack of healthcare and inadequate supplies of soap to

prevent the spread of germs.

In the UK we are very lucky to be supported with high quality healthcare, a much better understanding of the importance of hygiene and access to facilities such as soap and sanitiser. This means that the likelihood of death from pneumonia, although still present, is reduced compared to lower income countries. However, this does not mean that awareness about pneumonia is not important in the UK. The Office for National Statistics reported that in 2016, 3.5% of people missed work due to respiratory problems¹ including pneumonia, so work still needs to be done to help reduce this.

Importance of hygiene standards in the office

The best way to prevent pneumonia is by maintaining high standards of hygiene, which will help to prevent the spread of harmful germs around the office. There are a number of factors that can improve office hygiene, such as educating staff about the importance of hygiene and providing the facilities to support high levels of hygiene. The benefit for the business is that investing in improving hygiene will help to reduce staff sick days and increase productivity.

Prioritising hand hygiene

Hand hygiene should be taken very seriously. Germs can be easily and quickly spread on hands if they are not washed properly. This means that staff should be encouraged to wash their hands regularly to avoid cross contamination of germs from other people or objects, such as door handles. This means that soap and sanitising facilities [2] should be in place in your company washrooms and around the office. Antibacterial foam soap dispensers [3] can be wall mounted in your washrooms to provide a simple and effective hand washing solution. Antibacterial soap and water will help to remove germs from hands, preventing the spread of germs around the workplace. Hand dryers [4] should be provided to encourage complete hand hygiene too.

It is also a good idea to provide hand sanitiser dispensers [5] around the office to encourage people to regularly sanitise their hands. Our antibacterial hand sanitiser [6] is alcohol free and provides a convenient and effective sanitising solution to improve hand hygiene.

Sanitising facilities

Other sanitising facilities can be provided to further improve hygiene standards. A study from world renowned microbiologist Dr Charles Gerba found that the average desk was up to 400 times dirtier than a toilet seat! This shows just how important it is to encourage staff to regularly clean their desk. Citron Desk and Equipment Wipes [7] provide an antibacterial wipe that can be used to clean computer mice and keyboards, as well as phones and the surface of the desk. You may also want to provide bottles of hand sanitiser [8] for employees to use on their desk as an added precaution.

Improve hygiene standards in your business

Improving hygiene standards in your business will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of your staff. A clean and hygienic office environment will reduce sick days and help increase productivity.

If you would like to find out more about our soap and sanitising solutions, then please contact our team [9] and make sure your company is providing effective hand hygiene solutions for your employees.