Infection Prevention and Control Measures

Keeping Special Olympics Ontario members safe and healthy.

To ensure the health and safety of all our Special Olympics Ontario members, we are implementing the Infection Prevention and Control Measures (IPCM). These measures are the essential standards to prevent the spread of contagious viruses and infections.

The 6 Standard Infection Prevention and Control Measures

1. Educate to prevent the spread
2. Hand hygiene
3. Respiratory and cough hygiene
4. Personal protective equipment
5. Safe management of equipment and the environment
6. Safe disposal of waste

1. Educate to prevent the spread

Prior to sport club engagement, educate your team members on how to prevent the spread of viruses and infections. Communicate the common signs of illness:

- Fever
- New or persistent cough
- Sore Throat
- Stomach Upset (Vomit/Diarrhea)
- Overall unwell feeling

Provide ongoing reminders to participants if they experience any of these symptoms, they should stay home.

"STAY HOME IF YOU FEEL UNWELL"

In addition, any individual who has cuts or open sores on their skin are to cover them with a plastic bandage or dressing. Open sores are opportunities for viruses and infections to enter the body.

2. Hand Hygiene

This is considered the most important measure when trying to reduce the spread of viruses and infection.

Your hands are the part of your body that are most likely to come into contact with people, surfaces and equipment, along with the pathogens that happen to be living there. Viruses are not visible to the naked eye, meaning you will not always know what germs are being harboured on your hands.

Decontaminating your hands as quickly and as thoroughly as possible is essential. This helps to protect you, all team members in your sport club and anyone else you may come into contact with throughout the sport training.

Washing your hands properly is an essential part of everyone's responsibility.

- Everyone should wash hands before and after sport training
- Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer after coughing, sneezing, using tissues, or after contact with respiratory secretions or anything contaminated by these secretions
- Use hand lotion when hands become chapped or irritated

3. Respiratory & Cough Hygiene

The aim of respiratory and cough hygiene is to reduce and prevent the risk of cross-transmission of respiratory illness and pathogens such as Covid-19.

Following the rules below will help you to stop the spread of infection through coughs and sneezes.

Catch it, Bin it, Kill it

• Cover your nose and mouth with a disposable tissue when sneezing, coughing, wiping and blowing the nose

• Dispose of all of your used tissues quickly into a garbage bin. Do not re-use tissues.

• Wash your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer after coughing, sneezing, using tissues, or after contact with respiratory secretions or anything contaminated by these secretions

• Wash your hands before touching your eyes, nose or mouth

Promote respiratory and cough hygiene with your sport club participants – we recommend that you review this protocol at the beginning of each sport training. Having a box of tissues, plastic bags available for used tissues, and have access to hand washing /sanitizer stations. Implement as part of your sport club practice the routine of handwashing before, during and after.

4. PPE - Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment is used to prevent or reduce the spread of viruses and infections. While the mask requirement may be lifted for SOO programs, inform your participants and encourage awareness that PPE is a great way to limit the spread of infection. Just like you would protect yourself from exposure to the sun by wearing sunscreen and a hat, the same applies to infection prevention and wearing a mask especially when you are feeling unwell.

Let your participants know that they are most welcome to wear their masks during the practice if they wish to. And in the unique situations: remind participants that making fun of a person who is wearing (or not wearing) a mask is considered bullying.

If there is any risk of coming into contact with blood or other bodily fluids, wear latex gloves. Gloves should only be worn once and disposed of in a plastic garbage bag. When discarding PPE gloves and or masks remind to wash hands afterwards.

5. Safe Management of Equipment and Environment

To the naked eye, your sport club environment might look clean. However, there are millions of potentially dangerous micro-organisms on your surfaces such as door handles, toilet seats, rails, washroom taps and garbage cans. In these critical areas, cleaning plays a vital role in reducing the risk of infection to you and your sport club participants.

Any equipment you use for your sport practice must be in good shape and undergone a thorough cleaning and disinfection prior to and after each practice. Think about how the equipment is being used by the participants and the frequency of their touch points. The cleaning, disinfection and sterilization of equipment and surfaces are essential for making it safe.

Participants should be responsible for their own care of clothes, water bottles, shoes, and uniforms, however if you are having to take on this task, ensure that the soiled items be stored in sealed plastic bags. Wash soiled clothing separately in hot soapy water and dry in a hot dryer.

Without these steps, microorganisms such viruses can survive and cause infection.

6. Safe Disposal of Waste

Any waste may contain living microorganisms or toxins and may have the potential to cause harm or infection. Before each sport practice ensure that there is a garbage bin accessible nearby. The foot-operated bins are more hygienic because they reduce the risk of getting germs onto your hands from touching the bin lid.

Spills of blood or other body fluids should be cleaned up by facility staff. If you are in a situation where you are required to clean up blood or other body fluids, latex gloves and a face covering (preferably a face shield) are to be put on. Clean the area with a fresh mixture of household bleach (1 part) and water (9 parts). Paper towels should be used and disposed of in a plastic garbage bag.

Use caution when disposing of garbage and other waste that may contain infected materials or used needles. Discard material soiled with blood or other body fluids in a sealed plastic bag.

Have on hand extra plastics bags for safe disposal of used tissues and other hazardous waste. Ensure participants clean their hands each time they touch the garbage containers.