Making the Workplace COVID-19 ready

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Cimas Medical Aid Society

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COVID READY WITH US

What do my Covid-19 test results mean?

Guarding against COVID-19 this winter

International Day against Drug Abuse and Trafficking

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Welcome to the June issue of Cimas Engage magazine. What a year this has been so far and what a time it is to be alive! As the fear, uncertainty and anxiety brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic begins to wear off, we replace it with caution, compliance and vigilance as we strive to prevent infection of the virus in our midst. We share tips on how to wear a mask properly and share some workplace tips.

In this issue we celebrate the silver linings, the good news of COVID-19 cover for all our members. Some welcome positivity and something to smile about amidst all the caution and fear!

Substance abuse is an often overlooked topic in our society and we jump right in with a look at some of the causes and effects of drug and substance abuse as we commemorate International Day Against Drug Use and Trafficking.

The dreaded winter months are upon us, and as the chilly weather begins to bite, we encourage you, our readers to maintain good health and guard against the dreaded winter bulge. Summer bodies are after all made in winter.

Enjoy the read, soak in some much needed winter sunshine and rest assured that you are covered for Covid!

Rufaro Masunda
Chief Marketing and Communications Officer: Cimas

We value your feedback and invite you to forward any comments and queries you may have on:
**Wearing Face Mask**

1. Wash your hands with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer.
2. Secure the strings behind your head or over your ears.
3. Cover your mouth and nose fully making sure there are no gaps.
4. If mask has metallic strip, press it to fit shape of your nose.
5. Do not touch the mask while using it. If you do, wash your hands.

**Removing Face Mask**

1. Wash your hands with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer.
2. Avoid touching the mask – it may be contaminated.
3. Remove the mask from behind by holding the strings with clean hands.
4. Dispose the mask in a closed bin without touching the front.
5. Wash your hands with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer.

**Washing Reusable Face Mask**

1. After following steps above for removing a mask.
2. Wash with clean water and soap.
3. Rinse properly.
4. Allow to dry exposed to the sun.
5. Iron to kill any viruses before reuse.

**Break the Chain! Stop the Spread**

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Cimas Medical Aid Society has announced that it will provide any of its members who test positive for COVID-19 with medical aid cover for subsequent treatment and clearance tests at the end of their treatment.

The cover, which is subject to the benefit levels provided for in the member’s medical aid package, includes admission to any hospital approved for COVID-19 patients, treatment in an intensive care unit within the hospital, all prescription drugs in and out of hospital and up to three clearance tests, in line with World Health Organisation guidelines.

It also includes general practitioner and specialist consultations, pathology tests, ambulance costs and physiotherapy.

Announcing the new measures, Cimas Medical Aid Society Managing Director Martin Mushambadope said the Society was providing this COVID-19 cover as part of its robust plan to ensure the safety of its members.

“We have now taken steps to ensure that any of our members who test positive for COVID-19, regardless of the medical aid package they are on, are covered for hospital admission, intensive care, medication and any other procedures related to their COVID-19 treatment up to the benefit limits of their package,” he said.
We are keen to ensure that members infected with the virus do not have to worry about facing a huge financial burden as a result of their hospitalisation,” he added.

Cimas Chief Marketing Officer Rufaro Masunda said the decision to cover all members for COVID-19, should any of them be tested and found to have been infected with the virus, was the latest in a number of measures the society had taken to safeguard its members and contribute to the fight against the novel coronavirus.

“We have been proactive in putting in place safeguards for our staff and members, introducing temperature testing, sanitisers and personal protective clothing for staff at our clinics ahead of the government announced lockdown.

“We have also supported the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries in its coordination of the private sector response to the COVID-19 virus, playing a critical role in ensuring that all support centres receive the equipment and items needed for them to function.

“The private sector has identified centres throughout the country ensuring that there are care facilities in main cities and towns. Government facilities are also being equipped and capacitated to run,” she said.

She added that Cimas has contributed ZWL3,750 000 to the fight against COVID-19. These funds will be channelled to facilities that include St Anne’s Hospital, Mater Dei Hospital, Montague Clinic and various government facilities around the country.

“Our focus during this crisis is to ensure that our members have a place to go when and if they should ever need it,” she said.

You will get access to:

1. Primary Healthcare | GP Consult
2. Pathology
3. Drugs | Road Ambulance
4. Hospitalisation Including ICU Treatment
5. Specialist and Physiotherapy
With businesses gradually opening again, it is important that the workplace is COVID-19 ready. This may involve modifying the workplace and the way in which people work to protect them from possible COVID-19 infection. It also means having a plan in place to deal with a situation in which an employee is believed to be possibly infected with the coronavirus.

It is a legal requirement that employees are tested for the virus within 14 days of the business reopening and that alcohol-based sanitisers are provided to sanitise the hands of employees when they come to work and that their temperature is checked with a thermometer. It is also a requirement that everyone wears a face mask.

The virus is spread when an infected person exhales, coughs or sneezes out infected droplets, which can be inhaled by others nearby and land on objects and surfaces that others may touch. Infection can occur by inhaling the virus or touching your mouth nose or eyes after touching a contaminated object or surface. Because some people can be infected without displaying symptoms, everyone should be treated and treat themselves as possibly carrying the virus.

Wearing a mask reduces the risk of spreading the virus and of becoming infected by touching your nose or mouth. However, the mask must be worn so that it covers the nose and mouth.

Everyone should maintain a distance of at least one metre but preferably two metres from everyone else. This may mean redesigning work spaces and allowing those who can work from home to do so, to reduce the number of people working within the same space.
The workplace must be kept clean and hygienic. Surfaces such as desks and tables and objects such as telephones and keyboards should be wiped regularly with disinfectant.

Employees should be encouraged to wash or sanitise their hands frequently and practise good respiratory hygiene. Sanitising hand rub dispensers should be placed in prominent places. Staff and visitors should be required to have a hand rub sprayed onto their hands before entering the building.

It is a good idea to display posters promoting thorough hand washing and good respiratory hygiene. Other communication tools can be used as well, such as email or intranet messages.

Good respiratory hygiene means sneezing or coughing into a tissue or into the inside of the elbow. If a tissue is used it should be disposed of by placing it in a bin with a lid on it. Providing such bins would assist with such tissue disposal. Consideration should be given to making tissues available for staff who need them.

Employees with even a mild cough or low grade temperature of 37.3 degrees Centigrade or more should be told to stay at home or work from home.

They should also stay at home if they have had to take simple medications such as paracetamol, ibuprofen or aspirin that could mask the symptoms of the virus.
Meetings

Unless it is absolutely necessary, avoid meetings and events. Instead consider teleconferences and online events. If that is not possible try to scale down as much as possible the number of people attending the meeting or event.

Ensure there are hand sanitisers and tissues available for use by those attending the meeting or event. Advise participants beforehand that if they feel unwell, they should not attend.

If possible, arrange seats so that participants are at least a metre apart. Open windows and doors whenever possible to make sure the venue is well ventilated.

Take down contact details, including phone numbers and addresses, of everyone attending the meeting or event, even the organisers and caterers. Retain this information for at least one month. Participants should be made aware that if anyone at the meeting turns out to have COVID-19 the list of participants will be made available to the health authorities.

If any of the participants displays symptoms of Covid-19, health authorities should let all other participants know. They should be advised to monitor themselves for symptoms for 14 days.

COVID-19 at workplace

If someone becomes unwell in the workplace or is suspected to have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19, he or she should move to an area that is at least two metres away from others, if possible to an isolated area, preferably an office with proper ventilation.

The national COVID-19 rapid response team should be called on toll-free hotline number 2019 for assistance and the symptoms explained. If the person concerned is able to make the call, this should be done from his or her cellphone. He or she should avoid touching other people, surfaces or objects that others may touch such as telephones, keyboards and door handles and should practise good respiratory hygiene, including covering the mouth when coughing or sneezing.

If in need of using a toilet, while awaiting medical assistance, a separate toilet should be used, if one is available.

By taking simple measures to prevent or contain the spread of the coronavirus, businesses will guard against a COVID-19 pandemic among their staff and contribute to preventing or containing the spread of the virus within the nation.
International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking falls on June 26 each year to raise awareness of the major problem that illicit drugs represent to society.

According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), nearly 200 million people are using illicit drugs such as cocaine, cannabis, hallucinogens, opiates, and sedative hypnotics worldwide.

Drug abuse versus addiction.
Drug abuse is when you use legal or illegal substances in ways you should not. You might take more than the regular dose of pills or use someone else's prescription.

Addiction is when you cannot stop. Not when it puts your health in danger. Not when it causes financial, emotional, and other problems for you or your loved ones. When that urge to get and use drugs fills up every minute of the day, even if you want to quit.

Why do people abuse drugs?
The reasons why people use drugs vary greatly for every individual. Often, a person is trying to fix an issue within their life, and they see drugs as the solution. A young person may be trying to fit in with their peers and views using alcohol or drugs as a means of feeling "a part of" a group. In contrast, many individuals use drugs to self-medicate. From chronic pain to mental health disorders, many people use drugs to alleviate symptoms of an ailment.

Here is the top five list why people abuse drugs.

Experimenting
It is not uncommon for addiction to stem from a person being curious and experimenting with drugs or alcohol. It is a scenario that often starts with a young person using alcohol or marijuana out of curiosity.

Family History/Genetics
If you have a family history of drug addiction, you may have a genetic predisposition to develop an addiction to drugs or alcohol. It is stated that about 30% – 70% of a person’s risk for addiction is linked to the genes they are born with along with other social factors.
Peer Pressure

Peer pressure usually applies to adolescents or young adults. The need to fit in, on some level, is built into each one of us. Some people may feel the need to participate in potentially harmful activities to do so. The pressure of being around others who are abusing drugs or alcohol can push someone to follow suit.

Self-Medicating

People struggling with any of a multitude of ailments may turn to drugs or alcohol to ease their pain. Mental health disorders and chronic pain leave some seeking solutions on their own. Alcohol or other substances can alleviate symptoms and seem like a short-term solution. However, people should look for manageable, long-term solutions under medical supervision to combat these issues. There are many reasons why people use drugs. Knowing the risk of using alcohol and other drugs is half the battle. When we educate ourselves about these issues, we are more likely to make better decisions in the future.

Impact of drug abuse on society

Drug abuse has a great impact on our society, the individual, the employers, and the country. On an individual level there is an increased rate of co-occurring mental disorders. Drug addiction is a complex mental disorder. Drug abuse is associated with substantial increases in rates of violent crime. Within family's, drug abuse can lead to:

Loneliness

Addiction can start when an individual feels lonely or is isolated from the friends and family. They turn to drugs and alcohol thinking that it will fill a void that they have been living with. People lacking positive daily interaction may choose to use substances to feel happy or content. Additionally, users begin to alienate themselves further if they fear being judged or that help is not available to them.
• Increase in child custody losses
• Increase in child abuse and neglect
• Increase in addiction risks for children of drug-addicted parents
• Increase in domestic disputes
• Increased rates of homelessness and poverty

For employers
• Increased strain on co-workers: Co-workers of drug-addicted people take on additional responsibilities at work to accommodate decreases in productivity. They also work longer hours to cover up for drug addicted individuals who fail to show up as scheduled. Someone working while under the influence of drugs and alcohol is at higher risk of workplace related injury, resulting in increased insurance premiums passed on to employers and co-workers.
• Loss in productivity: Losses in revenue from decreased productivity due to illicit drug use in the workplace is significant.

For the country:
• Addiction is a chronic disease in many countries, and this puts a strain on the Healthcare system. The health care burden relating to drug abuse is huge and this is usually absorbed by hospitals and taxpayers.

Help for drug or alcohol addiction

If you or someone you know needs more assistance, contact Cimas iGo 0772403879 (08080236) on and we will get you the help that you need.

Alcoholics Anonymous
Anne: +263 712 212 424; 263 777 326 098
Hotline: +263 719 123 711

Highlands Halfway House
+263 242 497 153; +263 864 421 0999
info@highlandshalfway.co.zw
Antibody test
This is a rapid test done using blood samples, either from a finger prick or blood drawn from your vein. Antibodies are proteins produced by the body in response to infection, therefore detect exposure to the SARS-CoV-2 virus. It has a quick turn-around time of 15 to 30 minutes, simple to perform and does not require special laboratory. However, antibodies are only detectable in blood after about seven days of infection (window period), and increase with time, therefore the test cannot detect very early infection. Antibody tests are mostly used as screening tests and in disease surveillance. Positive results indicate exposure to the Covid Virus and are referred for PCR to determine if the patient has a current/active infection.

What do the test Results mean
A negative result may mean that
1. You have never been exposed to Covid-19
2. You were exposed in the last few days and your body has not yet produced detectable levels of antibodies.

What to do
1. Continue practising the recommended preventative measures
2. Get a PCR test if you suspect that you have been
in contact with a positive person or if you have symptoms of infection

A positive result means
1. You may have a current infection right now
2. You were exposed to Covid-19 virus in the past and your body mounted a response to it and recovered, even if you may have not felt sick

What to do
1. Get a PCR test for confirmation of current infection
2. Continue practising preventative measures

Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)
This is a confirmatory test for the genetic material of the virus on nasopharyngeal or throat swabs and sputum samples. This test has high risk of cross-infection and requires a special laboratory. Turn-around time is at least 48 hours.

PCR Negative test means
1. You are not currently infected with Covid-19,
2. You have recovered from a previous Covid-19 infection

What to do
Continue practising preventative measures
Get a repeat PCR if you have been in contact with a positive person or if you feel the symptoms of Covid-19

PCR Positive Results
You have current infection of Covid-19

What to do:
1. Self-isolate
2. Continue practising preventative measures
3. Covid-19 response team will contact you for further management.

You can access both tests at Cimas Medlabs for individuals and corporates.

All laboratory test results should be interpreted together with the clinical presentation and history of the individual.
Guarding against COVID-19 this winter

Winter is a time when various illnesses tend to abound, in particular the common cold or influenza. This winter we have COVID-19 to contend with as well.

The common cold, like COVID-19 is caused by a coronavirus. We have come to accept such colds or doses of influenza as inevitable and generally recover from them quite quickly.

Most people recover from COVID-19. Some don’t even display symptoms. However, it spreads more rapidly than the common cold and for some people proves fatal, as we know from the large number of COVID-19 deaths occurring daily in countries where the virus has spread most rapidly.

Because the countries worst affected by COVID-19 tend to be colder countries where the virus took hold during their winter season and by contrast the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in hotter parts of the world such as Africa are relatively few, some have suggested that the virus thrives better in colder environments than in hot ones.

If that is the case, then we better be extra vigilant this winter and safeguard ourselves against the new coronavirus. Since the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Zimbabwe are relatively few, some people are not taking the virus seriously, as shown by the casual approach of many people when it comes to social distancing and wearing a mask.

It would be wise to be on our guard. If the virus suddenly starts to spread as rapidly as in some parts of the world, we will regret not taking it more seriously now.

Interestingly experts consider that colds are more common in winter not so much because of the drop in temperature but because people tend to stay indoors more in close proximity to one another.
The measures recommended to guard against the common cold are basically the same as are recommended to avoid becoming infected with COVID-19. They are to avoid close contact with others, cough or sneeze into a tissue or the crook of your arm, wash your hands after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects such as such as toys and doorknobs.

So it may be that by observing the laid down precautions against COVID-19, namely by keeping a distance of between one and two metres between you and anyone else, frequently washing or sanitising your hands, sneezing or coughing into a tissue, which you then dispose of in a bin with a lid, or into the inside of your elbow, and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces and objects, we will not only reduce the risk of becoming infected with COVID-19 but of catching the common cold this winter.

So let’s observe the precautions against COVID-19. One of the big differences between the common cold and COVID-19 is not only that COVID-19 spreads more rapidly than the common cold but it can result in death for a small percentage of those who become infected with it.

Wearing a mask, which is now mandatory outside the home, also helps prevent or slow down the spread of the virus. However, it must be worn correctly, covering the nose as well as the mouth.

Another major difference is that people can be infected and capable of spreading the virus without necessarily displaying any symptoms of the virus themselves.

We have been warned that the virus could spread more rapidly as people return to work and in winter. Many people have returned to work and winter appears to be here. So let’s be especially careful to keep ourselves and others safe.
The nights are long, the mornings frosty and the days short. The temperatures have dropped, and we are all trying to stay as warm as possible. With the onset of winter comes changes in our eating patterns, craving for larger portions of warm and comforting foods and irresistible hot sweet beverages. It is important to maintain healthy eating habits and keep well nourished to support your immune system.

How do you ensure that you do not gain weight during the cold winter months?

1. Make sure to get some exercise daily, even if it is just 10 minutes a day first thing in the morning by your bed side. Follow a simple 10 minute home workout, visit the iGO facebook page.

2. Using smaller plates and bowls to serve food, stops you from eating too much.

3. Eat your food slowly. It generally takes about 20 minutes for the brain to register that you are full.

4. Add beans, lentils and split peas to stews, soups and salads to give a boost of nutrients and to make you feel fuller on a smaller portion.

5. We tend to forget about water during the colder months. But drinking water is just as important in winter as it is in summer. Drink at least 2 litres of water daily to help with metabolism and keeping your appetite in check. Have it warm and add a few slices of lemon, orange, ginger or a few mint leaves to give it a lovely flavour.

6. If you are drinking lots of hot beverages to stay warm during the day, only add 1 teaspoon or less of sugar or honey into your cup of tea or coffee. Avoid hot chocolate or flavoured coffees that are laden with loads of sugar.

So, take a break to see how full you feel before going for a second helping.
Spicy Butternut Soup

Ingredients

- 1 medium butternut, peeled and diced
- 1 medium head of cauliflower chopped
- 1 medium onion chopped
- 1 tsp chopped garlic
- 1 tablespoon sunflower or canola oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 tsp fresh grated ginger
- ¼ tsp white pepper (use less if you do not want it too spicy)
- 2 cups water
- ½ cup milk (optional)

Method:

1. In a medium sized pot, warm 1 tablespoon oil over medium heat. Add the onion, garlic and ginger. Fry for a few minutes. Add butternut, cauliflower, salt and white pepper. Cook, stirring often, until the onion has softened and is starting to turn golden on the edges, about 5 minutes.

2. Add 2 cups of water to the pot and allow to simmer until vegetables are tender, for about 30 minutes.

3. Transfer soup to blender. Securely fasten the lid being careful to avoid hot steam escaping from the lid and blend until soup is creamy. Alternatively use a hand held immersion blender and blend the soup in the pot. Blend till smooth and creamy. If you would like to thin out your soup further, stir in more water or some milk for a creamier texture.

4. Let leftover soup cool completely before transferring it to a proper storage container and refrigerate for up to 4 days (leftovers taste even better the next day!).