

Precautionary measures against the spread of COVID-19 for gym managers

The Ministry of Health, in the context of a series of guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19, urges the gym managers to implement the following protective measures.

It is noted that for the purposes of these guidelines, gym staff shall mean the personnel having contact with the public or working in areas visited by the public.

These measures shall be considered as the minimum measures to be implemented. Gym managers are advised to develop similar and additional measures depending on the configuration and conditions of their facilities.

Access to the gym

- Access to the gyms and use of the equipment should be pre-scheduled (by telephone or the internet), in order to avoid close contact and overcrowding.
- One person is allowed per ten (10) square metres of space. This can be achieved through a reservation system for both the area of the classes and the area with the exercise machines and time limits for using the equipment.

Staff

- The staff is responsible to oversee customers observing the rules.
- The management of the gym should provide written guidelines and training to the staff on how COVID-19 is spread, its symptoms and how to recognise them in a timely manner. The aim is to be able to seek appropriate medical assistance and laboratory testing and minimise the risk of infection for both the public and the employees.
- Strict implementation of the Guidelines for Health and Safety at Work during the Coronavirus pandemic

https://www.pio.gov.cy/coronavirus/en/pdf/MEASURES_AGAINS_COVID-19_AT_WORKPLACES.pdf

<https://www.pio.gov.cy/coronavirus/en/pdf/delivery.pdf>

- Moreover, the staff is responsible to act immediately in case a client develops any symptoms, by removing him/her from the facilities and at the same time to inform the person in charge.
- The staff should check customers sanitising their hands before entering the gym.
- The use of gloves and masks by the staff is compulsory.
- More information on the masks available on the websites of the Ministry of Labour and the Customer Protection Service

[http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dli/dliup.nsf/All/7D50E0A034CB6D6EC2257F4100396EB3/\\$file/PPE%20Masks.pdf](http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/dli/dliup.nsf/All/7D50E0A034CB6D6EC2257F4100396EB3/$file/PPE%20Masks.pdf)

<http://www.consumer.gov.cy/mcit/cyco/cyconsumer.nsf/All/61B14C8448F1ACB6C225856F003AB9D4?OpenDocument>

- Staff should change gloves frequently, especially between customers (e.g. spotters) and avoid unnecessary contact with machines/equipment. It is noted that the use of gloves does not substitute hand washing.

- Staff belonging to vulnerable groups should be assigned with tasks with low risk exposure.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze; Throw used tissues immediately in the trash. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into the inside of the elbow).
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with your hands to reduce the risk of infection, clean and sanitise your hands frequently especially following contact with respiratory secretions and after using the toilet.
- Any employee with COVID-19 symptoms should stay home and call his personal physician. In case symptoms are observed during the work, the employee should leave the workplace immediately and return only when these symptoms have ceased and after obligatorily consulting his personal physician.

Gym areas

- Written instructions should be displayed in a prominent area of the entrance informing the customers on the symptoms of the disease and in case they have such symptoms they should be prevented from entering the premises.
- Written instructions all over the premises addressed to the customers:
 - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or cough or sneeze into the inside of your elbow. Throw used tissues immediately in the automatic (with sensor) or foot-operated waste bins.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with your hands to reduce the risk of infection.
 - Use gloves or sanitise your hands regularly even when you wear gloves.
- All areas should be sufficiently and where possible continuously ventilated artificially or naturally from the inside out. Particular attention should be given to the exercise areas which should be regularly ventilated due to the great number of people staying there for long time. The air conditioning systems should be operated according to the instructions given by the Labour Inspection Department available on the following website:
<https://www.pio.gov.cy/coronavirus/en/pdf/erg46.pdf>
- The distance between machines should be at least 2 meters towards all directions. If this is not possible, the machines will be used alternatingly. Otherwise, screens can be put up around each machine, which will have to be disinfected before and after every use.
- The distance between the rows (if any) of cardio machines (e.g. elliptical machines, runners, bikes) should be at least two meters. Machines of the same row should be used alternatingly. Otherwise, screens can be put up around each machine, which will have to be disinfected before and after every use.
- The appropriate ground markers should be placed to indicate the distance between the customers and between the machines.
- Sanitisers shall be placed to all gym areas.
- Dressing rooms and saunas will remain closed. Lockers can be used, and they will have to be disinfected during the day. Moreover, there will be sanitisers and signs urging the customers to disinfect the lockers before use.

- Toilets should be naturally or artificially ventilated at all times.
- Reduce the transactions in cash where possible and promote contactless transactions.
- Personal programme cards should be avoided to reduce unnecessary contacts with surfaces and objects.
- Customers are encouraged to bring their drinks/water from home. Drinks/water may be bought from automatic vending machines by taking the necessary protective measures (cleaning / disinfection). The operation of bars and water coolers is prohibited.
- The areas should be supplied with automatic (with sensor) or foot-operated waste bins.
- If there is a swimming pool in the gym its operation will be governed by the relevant decrees and instructions.

Practices during exercise

- Clean your hands before entering the gym. Wash your hands with soap and water, dry them with paper towel and sanitise them.
- Group classes are allowed for indoor gyms using the appropriate markers to designate the place of each customer observing 10 sqm per customer who is not allowed to move around.
- Customers should avoid using the equipment jointly or alternately.
- Customers should bring with them and use their personal towel.
- Any personal items such as bags should not be left in the public areas of the gym.
- All machines/equipment (e.g. bars, discuses, barbells, pulleys) should be disinfected before and after use with disinfectant available next to each machine and all over the premises.
- Machines should not be used jointly (two persons per machine) and should be disinfected before any alternation.
- Customers should keep 2 meters between them.
- Customers should use their personal exercise mat.
- If a person belongs to a vulnerable group, he/she should avoid using indoor facilities at this stage of the pandemic.

Cleanliness

- Written cleaning and disinfection instructions should be provided to the cleaning staff.
- Schedule all cleaning routines.
- The cleaning service should perform extended cleaning and disinfection tasks many times per day and more attention should be paid to all contact surfaces and public areas.
- Floors, benches and sanitary facilities (toilets, washbasins) should be kept cleaned and regularly disinfected according to the instructions. Always flush the toilet with the toilet lid down. Where a negative pressure system is in operation the windows of the toilet should remain closed.
- All frequent contact points should be regularly cleaned and disinfected (e.g. fitness equipment, barbells, bars, discuses, pulleys, handles, stair baluster, elevators, switches) with a 1000 ppm

chlorine solution, or an antiseptic with at least 70% of alcohol. The Department of Agriculture provides information on the professional tasks using biocidal products, as well as on the approval and use of appropriate detergents and disinfectants.

- The cleaning staff should wear a working uniform and use disposable gloves when carrying out cleaning tasks. It is noted that the gloves shall not replace hand washing.
- Public toilets should have liquid soap and disposable paper towels (which should be disposed of in foot-operated waste bins near the washbasins), and alcohol-based antiseptic solution (with 70% of alcohol). Air jets should be prohibited since they disperse droplets into the atmosphere.
- When full, plastic bags should be tightly closed and removed immediately.

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