

Increased flu activity in York Region

Over the past few weeks there has been an increase in influenza activity across York Region. To date, there are 164 laboratory-confirmed influenza cases in York Region. Influenza A (H3N2) is the primary circulating strain and it is well matched to this season's influenza vaccine.

Young children and influenza

Children under five years of age, especially those younger than two years of age, are at high risk of flu-related complications. These complications include pneumonia, encephalopathy (inflammation of the brain), ear infections, sinus infections and worsening of medical problems like asthma or heart disease. In rare cases, flu complications can lead to death.

How to protect against the flu

- 1. Get vaccinated** – The flu vaccine is the best way to protect against flu. Studies show the flu vaccine can prevent 70 to 90 per cent of illness in healthy adults and children.

York Region Public Health recommends everyone six months and older get the flu shot. It's not too late to get vaccinated.

Flu shots are available at:

- Physicians' offices, for people six months of age and older
- Pharmacies, for people five years of age and older
- York Region Public Health clinics, for people three years of age and older

Visit ontario.ca/flu to find where you can get the flu shot.

For more information about flu vaccines contact York Region Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653.

- 2. How can you reduce the chances of getting the flu?**

- Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and warm water. If soap and water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw the tissue out immediately
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Avoid people who are ill and stay home when you are sick
- Keep common surfaces and items clean and disinfected



What are symptoms of the flu?

Symptoms of the flu may include:

- sudden onset of headache
- chills
- cough
- sore throat
- runny nose
- fever
- loss of appetite
- muscle aches
- fatigue

Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea may also occur in children. Most people recover from the flu within a week to 10 days. People aged 65 years or older, pregnant women and individuals with chronic health conditions may be at greater risk of becoming ill and developing severe health problems such as pneumonia.

How does the flu spread?

The flu spreads through the air from coughing and sneezing. It also spreads through direct contact with surfaces, unwashed hands, or objects such as toys and eating utensils that have been contaminated by the influenza virus.

A person with flu may be able to infect other people one day before symptoms develop and up to seven days after becoming sick.

For more information, visit york.ca/flu

