



Sudbury & District

Health Unit

Service de
santé publique

*Make it a
Healthy
Day!*

*Vissez Santé
dès
aujourd'hui!*

Main Office/Bureau principal:

1300 rue Paris Street
Sudbury ON P3E 3A3
☎ (705) 522-9200
☎ (705) 522-5182

Branch Offices/Succursales:

101 rue Pine Street E
Box/Boîte 485
Chapleau ON P0M 1K0
☎ (705) 860-9200
☎ (705) 864-0820

Espanola Mall
800 rue Centre Street
Unit/Unité 100 C
Espanola ON P5E 1J3
☎ (705) 222-9202
☎ (705) 869-5583

6163 Highway/Route 542
Box/Boîte 87
Mindemoya ON P0P 1S0
☎ (705) 370-9200
☎ (705) 377-5580

1 rue King Street
Box/Boîte 58
St.- Charles ON P0M 2W0
☎ (705) 222-9201
☎ (705) 867-0474

Toll-free/Sans frais
(where long distance charges apply/
lorsque les frais d'interurbains
s'appliquent)

1-866-522-9200

www.sdhu.com

October 2009

Dear parents, caregivers, and guardians:

Re: If your child has influenza-like illness

With children back in school, we know that you may have concerns about how to keep your family healthy and reduce the chances of someone getting sick with influenza. This letter has information about what you can do to limit the spread of seasonal and H1N1 influenza and help the Sudbury & District Health Unit monitor the spread of influenza.

At this time, we do not expect to close schools due to influenza. Schools will keep working with the Health Unit to make decisions that are in the best interest of your children and school staff.

What to do if your child has influenza-like illness:

If your child is sick with influenza-like symptoms, please report this to the school. This information will help the Health Unit track the spread of illness.

Seasonal influenza and the H1N1 flu virus result in similar symptoms — sudden fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue, and muscle or joint aches. In children under the age of five, vomiting and diarrhea are more common and fever may not be prominent.

- Please keep ill children at home until they are feeling well enough to do normal activities. Remember to report the illness to the school.
- You are encouraged to call your health care provider or Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000, TTY 1-866-797-0007 if you need more information about flu-like illness. Telehealth offers free, confidential advice from a registered nurse, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

As you know, finding childcare on short notice can be hard. Thinking ahead of time about how you would manage if your child became ill can help you reduce this stress.

About the H1N1 flu virus

We expect to see more cases of H1N1 flu in the coming weeks and months, and some of those cases will likely be in schools. Most people infected with H1N1 to date have had mild illness.

Vaccination

Ontario will immunize people 65 years of age and older and residents of long-term care homes, with seasonal flu vaccine first. Ontario will offer the rest of the province's population the H1N1 vaccine beginning in November followed by a universal influenza immunization program with the seasonal flu vaccine in months following.

As the vaccination information and clinic dates, times, and locations are confirmed, this information will be posted on the Health Unit's website at www.sdhu.com.

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*An Accredited Teaching Health Unit
Centre agréé d'enseignement en santé*

What you can do to keep yourself and your family healthy:

- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 15 seconds. Be sure to clean your hands after sneezing or coughing and after touching surfaces others may have touched.
- Keep an alcohol-based hand sanitizer at work, home, and in your car.
- Cough and sneeze into your upper sleeve or a tissue, not your hand. Dispose of tissues immediately.
- Keep commonly touched surfaces clean and disinfected.
- Protect yourself and others by talking to your health care provider about seasonal and H1N1 flu vaccines.
- If you are ill, stay home.

For more information about H1N1 influenza or to read the H1N1 guidelines for schools, visit the Sudbury & District Health Unit website at www.sdhu.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'PS', written over a horizontal line.

Penny Sutcliffe, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer