

Management of Influenza in the Home



The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has an on-line self-assessment tool to help understand what to do if you're sick. It can be found at www.pdhu.on.ca.

Instructions for the sick person

- If you become ill, stay home until you have not had a fever for 24 hours and you feel well enough to resume normal activities. It is not unusual for individuals to have a cough for days to weeks after a respiratory infection, so a cough alone is not enough reason to keep someone away from work or school.
- If you are a healthcare provider, you should remain off work until 24 hours after all symptoms have resolved, typically a period of five to seven days. However, healthcare providers who have been appropriately treated with oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) for 72 hours will not be as infectious and may return to work if they feel generally well except for a mild cough. Staff should consult with Occupational Health (if available) for a return to work assessment.
- Avoid contact with the rest of the family by using a separate bedroom and bathroom (if possible). If the bathroom must be shared, ensure you have your own towel.
- Cough into a tissue or your sleeve. Discard tissues immediately.
- Wash hands frequently using soap and water or an alcohol hand sanitizer.
- Don't share anything that goes in your mouth, like utensils, drinking glasses and toothbrushes.
- Don't have visitors in the house.
- If you need to leave the house for a medical appointment, a surgical mask can be worn. These may be available at pharmacies, medical surgical supplies vendors or hardware stores. See below for when to seek medical care.
- Follow the advice of your health care provider. Avoid the use of aspirin and aspirin-containing products for children and teenagers.

Instructions for caregivers

- Only one family member should care for a sick person. Pregnant women should avoid providing care to others.
- Have as little close contact as possible with the sick person. Stay at least 6 feet away from the sick person (if possible).
- When holding a small child who is sick, place their chin on your shoulder so that they do not cough in your face.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, especially after you care for the sick person.
- Provide extra cleaning in frequently touched areas of the house (table tops, keyboards, door knobs, counter tops, remote controls, telephones, light switches, etc). Dishwashing and laundry can be done as normal.

When to call the doctor

Most people with the flu begin to feel better after a few days. However, be on the lookout. Sometimes complications, such as asthma or pneumonia arise and the ill person may need to have a health assessment.

Here are some signs to look for:

- Starts to feel better, then the fever returns
- Wheezing, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, coughing up blood
- Purple or bluish lip colour
- Chest pain
- Hard to wake up, unusually quiet or unresponsive, strange thoughts or actions
- New onset of diarrhea, vomiting or abdominal pain
- Signs of dehydrations such as dizziness when standing, and low urine production

If any of these things occur, call a health care provider for advice.

Continued...

FACT SHEET
www.pdhu.on.ca



Perth District
Health Unit



How can I get more information?

Perth County

Call Health Line at 519-271-7600 ext 267. Listowel call 1-877-271-7348 ext 267.

Monday to Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm

www.pdhu.on.ca

Huron County

Call 519-482-3416 or 1-877-837-6143.

Monday to Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm

www.huroncounty.ca/health

Telehealth

Call 1-866-797-0000.

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