



Media Releases

What to do if you develop H1N1 flu symptoms

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People who become infected with the pandemic H1N1 flu virus show a wide range of symptoms that range from minimal symptoms to experiencing serious illness. Most people do not have severe illness, even though a few days may have to be spent in bed.

Many people experience typical flu symptoms such as fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, muscle and joint aches and pains, cough and/or sore throat, and occasionally vomiting and diarrhea. Most people recover in less than a week, though fatigue and cough can last longer.

Normally healthy people who become ill with the flu might feel miserable but usually do not require a visit with their doctor. We recommend that you take the following steps if you become ill:

- Stay home – do not go to work or to school for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone
- Get plenty of rest
- Drink clear fluids to prevent dehydration
- A pain reliever may help with fever and aches, but do not give aspirin (ASA, acetylsalicylic acid) to children or teenagers

“There is increasing community spread of the H1N1 flu virus in Halton and it is important for everyone to understand that one of the ways you can help stop the spread of this virus is by staying home when ill and taking care of yourself when you are sick,” said Dr. Bob Nosal, Halton Region’s Medical Officer of Health. “Halton Region’s website at www.halton.ca has links to self-screening and assessment tools on the H1N1 page. These tools can greatly assist those who are ill to determine if they need to see a doctor.”

You should contact your doctor for advice on what you need to do and treatment recommendations if you or your child have flu symptoms and:

- Your child is under the age of 5
- Your child is on long-term ASA therapy
- You or your child (5 years of age and older) has a chronic medical problem such as heart disease or asthma
- You are pregnant
- You are over the age of 65
- You have a medical condition requiring ongoing medical treatment
- You are severely overweight (body mass index over 40)

Other people can monitor themselves or their children at home. However, get medical care right away at the nearest emergency department if you or your child develop:

- difficulty breathing or shortness of breath when doing very little or resting
- purple or blue lips
- continuous vomiting or severe diarrhea, especially with signs of dehydration such as dizziness when standing, absence of urination, or in infants, a lack of tears when they cry
- confusion or disorientation

- stiff neck
- seizures

To reduce your chances of becoming ill this flu season, remember to practice basic infection prevention measures:

- Get an H1N1 flu immunization.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 15 seconds or use a 60 to 90% alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cough and sneeze into your upper sleeve or a tissue, not your hand. Dispose of tissues immediately and clean your hands.
- Keep commonly touched surfaces clean and disinfected using commercially available cleaning products.

For up to date information about the H1N1 flu virus including details about H1N1 immunization clinics and locations, visit www.halton.ca.

The Regional Municipality of Halton serves more than 450,000 residents in the City of Burlington, the Town of Halton Hills, the Town of Milton, and the Town of Oakville. Halton Region is committed to meeting the needs of its residents through the delivery of cost-effective, quality programs and services, including water and wastewater; Regional roads and planning; emergency medical services; waste management; public health; Ontario Works (formerly social assistance); children's and seniors' services; social/non-profit housing; heritage programs; emergency management and business development. For more information, dial 311 or visit Halton Region's website at www.halton.ca.

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