



Influenza

<p>What is it?</p>	<p>Influenza (the flu) is a respiratory illness caused by Influenza A and Influenza B viruses. Influenza season in Canada is usually November through April.</p> <p>Signs and symptoms of influenza may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fever ➤ Cough, sneezing, runny nose ➤ Headache ➤ Body aches and pain ➤ Exhaustion ➤ Sore throat ➤ Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea are more common in children than adults. <p>Influenza is most serious for babies less than 2 years of age, adults over 65 years of age, and people with chronic illnesses.</p>
<p>How is it spread?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Breathing in droplets containing influenza virus that have been coughed or sneezed into the air by an infected person. ➤ Direct contact with the hands of an infected person (e.g., shaking hands, holding hands). ➤ Contact with an object contaminated with the influenza virus (e.g., toys, furniture, doorknob, taps, computer keyboard, telephone, shopping cart handle). <p>Influenza viruses can live for several hours on hard surfaces. Caregivers may get the flu virus on their hands by assisting a child to use a tissue and then spread it to other children by touching them.</p> 
<p>Incubation period</p>	<p>Usually 1 – 4 days from contact with an infected person</p>
<p>When is the person contagious?</p>	<p>Usually from 1 day before to 5 days after symptoms develop (up to 7 days after symptoms develop for young children)</p>
<p>How to prevent spread of the illness to other children.</p> 	<p>Child may attend school or child care if they feel well enough to take part in activities.</p> <p>Carefully dispose of (or clean, if applicable) articles contaminated with nose and throat secretions of an infected child.</p> <p>For more information, refer to <u>Routine Practices</u>.</p> <p><i>Handwashing is the best way to stop the spread of infections.</i></p>



Influenza vaccine is recommended and provided free for:

- ***children 6 to 23 months of age***
- ***household contacts and those providing regular child care to children 0 to 23 months of age***
- ***children and adults with a health condition that places them at high risk for influenza.***