

First Lab-Confirmed Influenza (A) Case in Simcoe Muskoka

Attention: Physicians, Long-Term Care Facilities, Rest & Retirement Homes, Emergency Departments, Infection Control Practitioners, Nurse Practitioners, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Family Health Teams, Occupational Health Professionals, Neighbouring Health Units, County of Simcoe Paramedic Services, Medavie EMS Ontario – Muskoka, Rama Mnjikaning EMS, CLHIN, NSMLHIN

Date: November 6, 2019

Simcoe Muskoka's first locally-acquired lab confirmed case of Influenza A has been reported to the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) for the 2019-2020 season. The sample was submitted as part of an individual case investigation in the Bradford area.

Influenza activity has started to be detected across Ontario. As of October 26, 2019, 40% of health units have reported at least one case of flu for the season to date. SMDHU will continue to analyze surveillance data and provide updates as necessary.

The following is an update of the influenza activity in Ontario and Canada:

Ontario:

- As of October 26, 2019 (week 43), 54 cases have been detected in Ontario. Of these, 80% were Influenza A.

Canada:

- In week 43, influenza activity increased slightly but remains at interseasonal levels across the country, with half of all regions reporting sporadic activity.
- The percentage of laboratory tests positive for influenza is lower for this time of year compared to previous years. The most common influenza virus circulating is Influenza A (H3N2).

SMDHU recommends getting immunized as soon as possible with any of the available age-appropriate influenza vaccines. At this time it is too early to determine if the vaccine is a good match for the circulating strains. This year's quadrivalent influenza vaccine for the 2019-2020 influenza season (northern hemisphere winter), contains the following:

- A/Brisbane/02/2018 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus;
- A/Kansas/14/2017 (H3N2)-like virus;
- B/Colorado/06/2017-like virus (B/Victoria/2/87 lineage); and
- B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus (B/Yamagata/16/88 lineage)

Similar to last year, the Public Health Ontario (PHO) Lab will no longer be conducting multiplex respiratory viral PCR (MRVP) which includes influenza testing on any specimens collected from the emergency department or ambulatory/outpatient settings. Influenza testing for patients in the emergency department may be done based on the hospital's laboratory capabilities and policies for rapid influenza or/and PCR testing. Diagnosis without testing will need to be made based on local activity and compatible signs and symptoms. For more detailed information, please go to:

http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/LAB_SD_121_Respiratory_Viral_Testing_Algorithm_and_Enhanced_Surveillance_Update.pdf

The Weekly Influenza News will be posted between November 6th and April 29th. You can find this information at the following link:

<http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/SeasonalInfluenza/Surveillance.aspx>

All lab-confirmed influenza cases and institutional respiratory outbreaks are reportable to public health to ensure timely follow-up. For additional information or to report influenza cases and respiratory outbreaks, please contact the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, Infectious Diseases Team at (705) 721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 extension 8809.

Additional Information on Influenza

1. Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, Influenza factsheet can be accessed at:
<http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/DiseaseInformation/FactSheetsIL/Influenza.aspx>
2. Public Health Ontario Factsheet, Influenza Vaccines for the 2019-20 Influenza Season – Focus on Adults 65 Years of Age and Over:
https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/fact-sheet-influenza-vaccine-2019-2020.pdf?la=en&_cldee=amlsbGIhbi5mZW5pa0BzbWRodS5vcmc%3d&recipientid=contact-ae4508e2496fe411a5800050569e0009-70968e309d4a44dd99a1b0403c565355&esid=bd901035-14f0-e911-8238-0050569e0009
3. Public Health Ontario, Antiviral Medications for Seasonal Influenza: Information for Health Care Providers, 2019:
https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/qa-antiviral-medication-influenza.pdf?la=en&_cldee=amlsbGIhbi5mZW5pa0BzbWRodS5vcmc%3d&recipientid=contact-ae4508e2496fe411a5800050569e0009-70968e309d4a44dd99a1b0403c565355&esid=bd901035-14f0-e911-8238-0050569e0009
4. Public Health Ontario, Antiviral Medications for Treatment of Influenza:
https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/fact-sheet-antiviral-medication-influenza.pdf?la=en&_cldee=amlsbGIhbi5mZW5pa0BzbWRodS5vcmc%3d&recipientid=contact-ae4508e2496fe411a5800050569e0009-70968e309d4a44dd99a1b0403c565355&esid=bd901035-14f0-e911-8238-0050569e0009
5. Public Health Agency of Canada, Issues of FluWatch can be accessed at:
<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/index-eng.php>
6. NACI Statement on Influenza Vaccination for the 2019-20 season can be accessed at:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/reports-publications/canada-communicable-disease-report-ccdr/monthly-issue/2019-45/issue-6-june-6-2019/article-1-naci-influenza-vaccine-statement-2019-2020.html>
7. Public Health Ontario now issues the Ontario Respiratory Virus Bulletin which can be accessed at:
<http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/ServicesAndTools/SurveillanceServices/Pages/Ontario-Respiratory-Virus-Bulletin.aspx>