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Widespread Influenza Activity in Simcoe Muskoka

Attention: Physicians, Hospitals, CNE, ER Manager, ER Physician, Infection Control Practitioners, Occupational Health Professionals, Community Health Centres, Walk-In Urgent Care Clinic, Nurse Practitioners, Ontario Health, Ontario Health Teams, Midwives, Family Health Teams, Indigenous Healthcare & Community, Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, Paramedic Services, Corrections

Date: December 19, 2025

Effective December 22, 2025, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) will be declaring widespread influenza activity in Simcoe Muskoka. This widespread activity is likely going to last for a few weeks. Widespread activity is defined by Public Health Ontario as “multiple ongoing laboratory-confirmed influenza outbreaks in institutions separated by some geographic distance, in other words, non-adjacent areas”. The formal declaration, which includes informing Public Health Ontario of the local situation, serves as a signal to health care partners to enact policies and strategies to control the further spread of influenza. **The [SMDHU Weekly Respiratory Virus Update](#) provides timely weekly data on Influenza, RSV and COVID-19, and this week is the first week where influenza activity is classified as very high.** During this week there have been up to 12 active influenza outbreaks in Simcoe Muskoka facilities, including long-term care homes, retirement homes and acute care facilities, spanning municipalities in both Simcoe County and the District of Muskoka.

As of December 19, 2025, approximately 600 confirmed cases of influenza have been reported in Simcoe Muskoka since September 1, 2025. The current proportion of local flu tests done that are positive is 29%. H3N2 is the predominant strain circulating. Despite the shift in influenza A H3N2 to subclade K, the H3N2 component of this year’s vaccine has shown to still provide some effective protection in preliminary [data](#). **Given the current epidemiology, we do expect more influenza infections and institutional outbreaks than an average season.**

You can view the latest weekly epidemiology of influenza, COVID-19 and RSV at our [Simcoe Muskoka Weekly Respiratory Virus Update](#), updated on Tuesday afternoons.

Antiviral Prophylaxis – Ministry Update

The Ministry of Long-Term Care recently issued a memo to long-term care homes providing updated information on influenza antiviral prophylaxis during outbreaks for the current respiratory illness season. During an influenza outbreak, antiviral prophylaxis is recommended for all residents and staff in long-term care homes, regardless of vaccination status, with the option to discontinue prophylaxis for vaccinated staff if the outbreak is subsequently determined not to be due to influenza A(H3N2). This update reflects the current epidemiology and the mutated H3Ns influenza strain. Please refer to our [Dec 10th Public Health Alert for dosing and Ontario Drug Benefit limited use codes](#) for oseltamivir/antivirals.

View all current Public Health Alerts by visiting the Health Professional Resources page at:

<http://www.smdhu.org/PHA>

Receive urgent public health updates by email (such as Public Health Alert) by subscribing at: www.smdhu.org/PHAlert

Influenza Vaccination

Influenza vaccine is recommended for anyone 6 months of age and older and is readily available at local pharmacies who can administer to anyone 2 years and older.

Reporting Influenza Cases and Outbreaks

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.

More Information

- [Recommendations for Outbreak Prevention and Control in Institutions and Congregate Living Settings – Appendix B Antivirals/Therapeutics](#)
- [Webinar on Antiviral Recommendations for Staff and Residents in an Influenza Outbreak – Dr. Colin Lee](#)
- [OCCP: Respiratory Illness – Tools and Resources for Doctors](#)
- [Simcoe Muskoka Weekly Respiratory Virus Update](#)
- [Ontario Respiratory Virus Tool](#)
- [CMOH memo](#)
- [The flu | ontario.ca](http://Theflu.ontario.ca)