

First Lab-Confirmed Influenza A Cases and Rest and Retirement Home Outbreak 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

Date: October 8, 2015

The Public Health Ontario (PHO) Laboratory has reported Simcoe Muskoka's first locally-acquired lab confirmed cases of Influenza A for the 2015-2016 season. There were two positive samples from an outbreak in a rest and retirement home in the Huntsville area.

Influenza activity has **not** been detected in most of Ontario which is typical for this time of year. A total of eight cases have been detected in Ontario from September 1 to September 26, 2015, with seven of them being Influenza A and one Influenza B. The health unit will continue to monitor surveillance data and provide periodic updates.

Overall, there is low influenza activity in Canada; however, influenza activity and detections are increasing, especially in BC where two influenza A outbreaks were reported between September 13 – 26, 2015.

Information about this year's Universal Influenza Immunization Program (UIIP) and influenza vaccine was sent earlier this week in a [HealthFax \(http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Libraries/JFY_HealthFAX/151006_Universal_Influenza_Immunization_Program_UIIP.sflb.ashx\)](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Libraries/JFY_HealthFAX/151006_Universal_Influenza_Immunization_Program_UIIP.sflb.ashx). **It is important that influenza vaccine be offered to your high-risk patients as soon as it is available as the two confirmed cases may signal an early start to the influenza season. Influenza season usually begins in earnest in mid November. Data from this year's southern hemisphere influenza season indicate a good match between the vaccine to the circulating A and B strains.**

Who can order vaccine	Who Vaccine is for	Order by
Primary care providers Long Term Care Homes Hospitals Rest & Retirement Homes	Individuals at high risk of influenza-related complications are more likely to require hospitalization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young children under five years of age (especially those younger than two years of age) • Children (age 6 months to 18 years) with neurologic or neurodevelopmental conditions or undergoing • Treatment with acetylsalicylic acid for long periods • Adults 65 years of age and older • Individuals of any age who are residents in long-term care home (LTCH) or other chronic care facilities • Individuals with underlying health conditions (e.g., cardiac/pulmonary disorders, renal disease, morbid • Obesity, diabetes, cancer or weakened immune systems • Pregnant women; and • Aboriginal Peoples. Individuals capable of transmitting influenza to those at high risk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care workers • Household contacts of those at high risk • Persons who provide child care to kids less than five years of age 	October 8th

Primary care providers Long Term Care Homes Hospitals Pharmacies Nursing Agencies Workplaces All other agencies required to prequalify with the MOHLTC	General Population	October 22 nd
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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, Communicable Disease Team at (705) 721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 extension 8809.

Additional Information on Influenza

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, Influenza information can be accessed at:
<http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/Immunization/flu.aspx>

Public Health Agency of Canada, Issues of FluWatch can be accessed at:
<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/index-eng.php>

NACI Statement on Influenza Vaccination for the 2015-2016 season can be accessed at:
<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/naci-ccni/flu-2015-grippe-eng.php>

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>