

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

Information on Acute Flaccid Paralysis Cases in Ontario

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 2, 2018

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 2018-2019 season. The sample was submitted as part of an individual case investigation in the Barrie area.

Influenza activity has started to be detected across Ontario. As of October 20, 2018, 35% 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 20, 2018 (week 42), 28 cases have been detected in Ontario. Of these, 89% were Influenza A.

Canada:

- In week 42, influenza activity increased slightly but remains at interseasonal levels across the country, with the majority of regions reporting no flu activity.
- The percentage of laboratory tests positive for influenza are similar, and as expected, for this time of year compared to previous years. The majority of influenza detections continue to be Influenza A (H1N1).

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 2018-2019 influenza season (northern hemisphere winter), contain the following:

- an A/Michigan/45/2015 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;
- an A/Singapore/INFIMH-16-0019/2016 (H3N2)-like virus;
- a B/Colorado/06/2017-like virus (B/Victoria/2/87 lineage); and
- a B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus (B/Yamagata/16/88 lineage).

Again this year, the 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 30th. 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 information can be accessed at:
<http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/Immunization/flu.aspx>
2. Public Health Agency of Canada, Issues of FluWatch can be accessed at:
<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/index-eng.php>
3. NACI Statement on Influenza Vaccination for the 2018-19 season can be accessed at:
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/reports-publications/canada-communicable-disease-report-ccdr/monthly-issue/2018-44/issue-6-june-7-2018/article-1-summary-influenza-2018-2019.html>
4. 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>

Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP)

As of October 24, 2018, there have been eight reports of Ontario children under investigation for acute flaccid paralysis (AFP). Currently, enteroviruses, including enterovirus D68 (EV-D68), are circulating in Ontario.

There has also been an [increase in AFP cases in children under 18 years of age in the United States](#) with no known cause, but some cases have tested positive for non-polio enteroviruses, particularly enterovirus A71 (EV-A71).

In Ontario, AFP is a reportable disease. AFP case definition:

- Acute onset of focal weakness or paralysis characterized as flaccid (reduced tone) without other obvious cause (e.g., trauma) in children less than 15 years old
- Cases of Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS) should be included as cases of AFP
- Note: Transient weakness (e.g., post-ictal weakness) should not be reported

For additional information or to report AFP cases, please contact the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, Infectious Diseases Team at (705) 721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 extension 8809.