

HALTON REGION HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
TEL: 905-825-6000 FAX: 905-825-1444

TO: Halton Physicians

Medical Chiefs of Staff: Joseph Brant Hospital, Halton Healthcare (Oakville, Milton and Georgetown Hospitals)  
Chairs of: Family Practice, Paediatrics, Internal Medicine, Emergency, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Surgery  
Chief of Laboratory Services and Infection Control Practitioners  
Halton Midwives

POST IN: Emergency Department and Physicians Lounge

FROM: Dr. Joanna Oda, Associate Medical Officer of Health

DATE: November 4, 2019

**RE: Information for Influenza season**

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### QUICK FACTS

- Influenza vaccination can now be offered to all persons 6 months of age and older.
- The Health Department's stock of high-dose trivalent vaccine has been fully distributed. Additional doses are not expected until late-November to early-December.
- Influenza activity is currently low in Halton and Ontario. Influenza A (H3N2) is currently the most common strain in Canada.

### KEY MESSAGES FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

- Encourage everyone to receive influenza vaccination, especially those at high-risk for complications.
- For persons over 65 years old, offer influenza vaccine with either high-dose trivalent or standard-dose quadrivalent vaccine based on availability. Do not delay vaccination. There is no preferential recommendation for this age group.
- The [Winter Respiratory Testing Guidelines](#) from Public Health Ontario take effect November 4, 2019.
- Public Health Ontario provides [Guidelines for the use of antivirals](#) for suspected and confirmed influenza and the management of outbreaks.
- When influenza is circulating, don't wait for a positive influenza test before starting treatment for patients with severe acute respiratory illness (requiring hospitalization) or at high- risk for complications.

### KEY MESSAGES FOR PATIENTS

- It is important to get vaccinated against influenza, especially if you're at high-risk for complications.
- It is more important to get vaccinated early in the flu season with any vaccine that is available than to wait for a specific vaccine.

### RESOURCES

- [Sign up online](#) for Halton's Weekly Influenza Activity Report starting in November.
- [Statement on Seasonal Influenza Vaccine for 2019-2020](#). National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI).
- [2019-2020 Universal Influenza Immunization Program](#). Information for Health Care Professionals. Ministry of Health.

Please report all suspected or confirmed cases of [Diseases of Public Health Significance](#) (formerly Reportable Diseases) to the Halton Region Health Department as soon as possible. Diseases marked \* should be reported immediately by telephone (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) or fax (Mon-Fri, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm only). Other diseases can be reported the next working day. Call 311, 905-825-6000 or toll free at 1-866-442-5866. For general information, please visit [halton.ca](http://halton.ca).

**If you can't access hyperlinks, please sign-up for electronic updates by emailing [doctors@halton.ca](mailto:doctors@halton.ca)**