



West Nile Virus (WNV)

West Nile Virus activity has been confirmed in Haldimand-Norfolk this year as well as Provincially, therefore some basic facts on WNV :

What is WNV?

West Nile virus is a virus mainly transmitted to people through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes transmit the virus after becoming infected by feeding on the blood of birds which carry the virus.

What are symptoms associated with WNV?

Most people infected with the virus have no symptoms or they have flu-like symptoms, such as fever, headache, body aches and fatigue. Sometimes though, the virus can cause severe illness, resulting in hospitalization and even death. Symptoms usually develop between two and 15 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito.

When is someone most at risk?

The chances of getting West Nile virus from an infected mosquito are low. While anyone can become infected with West Nile virus, the risk of severe illness increases with age. The risk of becoming infected is greatest during mosquito season. In Canada, this can start as early as mid-April and last until the first hard frost in late September or October.

What preventative measures can be taken?

- Wearing light, long clothing-especially when in long grassy areas
- Use insect repellent that contains DEET
- Avoid water collection, empty out pools of water in bird baths, ponds, tires, etc.

Legionellosis

Public Health Ontario Laboratory (PHOL) has noticed an increase in the number of Legionellosis cases in Ontario, particularly in the Greater Toronto Area and surrounding health units. There have been 78 confirmed cases reported between August 1st and September 21st, which is higher than the expected average. Fourteen health units are involved including, Waterloo Region (5), Niagara Region (5) and City of Hamilton (4). Of the 78 cases, 69% are male and the median age of the cases is 63 years (range 33- 92).

Symptoms associated with Legionellosis:

Symptoms are often similar to other forms of pneumonia and usually begin 2 to 14 days after one's exposed to the bacteria.

- High fever
- Chills
- Cough
- Muscle aches
- Headaches

Testing

If Legionellosis is suspected, a urine sample and lower respiratory samples are required for laboratory testing. In addition to testing, please contact public health to notify infectious disease team of a possible Legionellosis case(s).

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• **Have you ever wondered about a particular practice? Wanted a reference document?**

• The Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee (PIDAC), is an advisory committee that provides expert advice, develop evidence-based knowledge products (best practice documents) and provide broad-based field advice. The advisory committees consist of health care professionals with an expertise in infectious disease, infection prevention and control, surveillance, public health, occupational health and safety.

• The knowledge products (best practice documents) can be found on the Ontario Public Health website at <http://www.oahpp.ca/resources/pidac-knowledge/>

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Flu Season

With influenza season knocking at the door, we'd like to gently remind you to educate and encourage your colleagues, clients, friends and family members to get their annual immunization. It is **FREE** to all Ontarians over 6 months of age who live, work, or study in Ontario.

The flu virus is a contagious illness that is easily spread through respiratory droplets expelled during coughing and sneezing. It may also be acquired by coming into contact with contaminated surfaces and then touching the mouth, nose or other mucus membranes.

The "flu shot" is an annual immunization against three strains of the flu viruses expected to circulate for that year. Since the flu strains vary year to year, annual immunization is necessary to provide the best protection. Studies have found that the flu shot can prevent 70 to 90% of influenza in healthy adults and children.

"Will the flu shot cause influenza?" Quite simply put, no. The flu vaccine is inactivated (dead) flu virus. This allows the immune system to create antibodies in preparation for the flu season.

Please contact the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit at 519-426-6170 for any questions, concerns or more information about the influenza vaccine.

Have a healthy influenza season!

Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit Clinic Dates:

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| Dunnville (Dunnville Secondary School) | Oct. 29 | 3:30 – 7:00 |
| Simcoe (Holy Trinity) | Oct. 30 | 4:00 – 7:00 |
| Caledonia (McKinnon Park Secondary School) | Nov. 1 | 4:00 – 7:00 |
| Delhi (Delhi District Secondary School) | Nov. 5 | 4:00 – 7:00 |
| Cayuga (Cayuga Secondary School) | Nov. 6 | 4:00 – 7:00 |
| Langton (Community Centre) | Nov. 7 | 4:00 – 7:00 |
| Hagersville (Hagersville Secondary School) | Nov. 8 | 4:00 – 7:00 |
| Port Dover (Port Dover Composite School) | Nov. 13 | 4:00 – 7:00 |
| Waterford (Waterford District Secondary School) | Nov. 14 | 4:00 – 7:00 |

