



## Pandemic Flu: What Your Health Care Provider Will Need to Know and May Ask You To Do

This fact sheet provides guidelines on what health care providers need to know and may ask you to do during the flu pandemic.

### Taking care of yourself at home

During a pandemic, it will be difficult to get medical attention. Therefore, it is important to be prepared to take care of yourself and others at home, as this can relieve most of your symptoms and reduce the risk of spreading the disease. Review the self-care algorithms prior to seeking medical attention. Call your health care provider right away, however, if you experience flu symptoms and:

- Have heart or lung disease, or any other chronic health problems that require regular medical attention.
- Are elderly or frail.
- Have other illnesses.
- Are pregnant.
- Are on treatments that affect your immune system (e.g., diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS).

If you do not start to feel better in a few days or your symptoms get worse, you should call the Health Unit or Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 (TTY 1-866-797-0007). Always call your health care provider and explain your symptoms before visiting, so that you don't infect other people at the office.

### Make a list of your flu symptoms

It is important to keep track of your or your family member's symptoms over the course of the illness so that you can provide details over the phone. Your health care provider may ask you if you and/or your family member have any of the following symp-

toms and when you experienced them:

- Fever.
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath.
- Pain or pressure in the chest or stomach.
- Confusion or disorientation.
- Bluish or unusually dark coloured lips or skin colour.
- Mucus or phlegm in cough.
- Severe vomiting or vomiting that does not go away.
- Symptoms that suddenly improve and then suddenly become worse.



### Other information your health care provider will need to know

They will also need to know whether:

- You have travelled in the last 14 days, and if so, where.
- You have had any contact with a sick person who has travelled in the last 14 days, and if so, where.
- Other people in your family, work, or social settings have similar symptoms.

### Visiting your health care provider's office or clinic

If your health care provider determines that you need to come into the office, you may be asked to take one or more of the following precautions to limit the spread of the virus:

- Once at the office, you may be asked you to wear a surgical mask that securely covers your nose and mouth.
- Sit in a separate room or area.

- Cough and sneeze into a tissue and throw it away afterward and then wash your hands with soap and water or use a waterless hand rub containing 60-90% alcohol.

### Special pandemic flu clinics

Your community may set up assessment centres for you to call or visit instead.

If this happens, the health care provider may not be able to consult your medical records. Therefore, in addition to being able to describe your symptoms, your recent travel history and any other ways you may have been exposed to the virus, it is important that you are able to provide the following information for yourself and other family members:

- Allergies.
- Immunizations.
- Past and current medical conditions.
- Current medications and drug dosages.

For more information visit the Ministry of Health website at [www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic) or the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit website at [www.hnhu.org](http://www.hnhu.org).



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