



Algoma
PUBLIC HEALTH
 Santé publique Algoma



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Dear Parent:

As you may know, there has been a new type of influenza virus circulating in the past several months. The majority of confirmed cases of this H1N1 strain have been reported in healthy young adults and most cases have been mild. However, it is important to have strategies in place to prevent the spread of respiratory disease in the school setting.

Algoma Public Health and the Directors of Education of the School Boards in our district are working together to reinforce existing infection prevention and control practices such as hand hygiene, staying home when ill, cough/sneeze etiquette and keeping the school environment as clean as possible.

The influenza season tends to intensify as people spend more time indoors but there are some key prevention activities that will mitigate the spread of respiratory viruses like influenza:

- Washing hands well and often with soap and water (or using alcohol-based hand rubs)
- Coughing and sneezing into your sleeve or arm
- Avoiding the sharing of personal items
- Avoiding frequent contact with eyes, mouth and nose
- Minimizing social contact with others while symptomatic
- Stay home/self isolate until feeling well again
- Contact your family doctor/emergency department if you feel very unwell

Influenza is typically characterized by a rapid onset of fever and cough, often with muscle aches, joint pain, sore throat or weakness.

Algoma Public Health will continue to conduct surveillance of the virus and work with our federal and provincial public health partners to provide relevant guidance. Communication with our school board partners is further augmented by the presence of Public health staff in every school.

Further resources and current updates on H1N1 can be found at www.algomapublichealth.com and more information will be sent out from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care in the form of a householder pamphlet in the coming days.

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