

FACT SHEET

The following information is provided to all hockey participants, teams, team trainers, and parents to help them deal with communicable illnesses, particularly influenza, during the current season.

A] The most common symptoms of influenza, including H1N1 are:

- Fever
- Cough
- Headaches
- Sore throat
- Body Aches
- Chills & fatigue
- Diarrhea and vomiting, while less common, may also be present, particularly in younger children

If any player shows these symptoms, it is recommended that he/she not partake in any hockey activities or other team functions until it is certain the player has fully recovered from the flu.

B] The virus is spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing. Transmission also occurs when someone touches objects or surfaces contaminated with the virus and subsequently touches their own mouth, eyes or nose. For these reasons, when a player shows flu-like symptoms, he/she should not associate with his team-mates to lessen or prevent transmission of the virus to others.

C] To protect the individual player, as well lessening the transmission of the virus, players are advised to:

- Cough and sneeze into a tissue and immediately dispose of the tissue into the garbage
- If a tissue is not available, cough/sneeze into your arm or sleeve, rather than into the hands.
- Frequently wash hands in warm water and soap. If soap and water are not readily available, then a hand-sanitizer, that is between 60% to 90% alcohol, should be used. Team trainers should ensure teams purchase extra bottles of hand sanitizer for team use during the season.
- Try to remember not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth unless they have just cleaned their hands.
- When available, ensure that you get the 'flu shot' either through school, medical clinic or where-ever else they can be obtained.

D] Individuals infected with this virus may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 7 more days after becoming sick. Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for longer periods.

The condition can last from a few days up to 2 weeks. To ensure an individual is over the flu, it is recommended that the player be symptom-free for at least 24 hours before re-joining in team activities.

E] While parents are ultimately responsible for what medication their child is given, medical authorities advise against giving children aged 18 years or younger aspirin, or aspirin-containing products due to the risk of Reye's syndrome. For relief of fever, acetaminophen [eg. Tylenol] or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs [eg. Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen etc] are recommended.

All team trainers are reminded that only parents or guardians are to administer medication for children under 18 years of age.

(BRENT: Not sure if we should include this full paragraph in the release, but thought I would put the cautionary message on paper. Would like, however, to see the reminder to trainers in the final product).

F] To ease the symptoms of the flu players and their parents should:

- drink lots of fluids;
- avoid drinks with caffeine;
- take basic pain or fever relievers;
- not give/take acetylsalicylic acid (ASA or Aspirin®) to children or teenagers;
- apply heat for short periods of time using a hot water bottle or heating pad to reduce muscle pain;
- take a warm bath;
- gargle with a glass of warm water or suck on hard candy or lozenges;
- use saline drops or spray for a stuffy nose; and
- avoid alcohol and tobacco.

Resources

- Public Health Agency of Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca
- Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care: www.health.gov.on.ca
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – USA: www.cdc.gov
- World Health Organization (WHO): www.who.int
- Ottawa Public Health Services: www.city.ottawa.on.ca