



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

December 17, 2018

### **Flu activity increasing in Hamilton**

**HAMILTON, ON** –Hamilton is seeing increased flu activity, signalling the start of the local flu season. As of December 8, 56 cases of lab confirmed influenza have been reported so far this season. Of these cases, 52 are Influenza A and 4 Influenza B.

Influenza activity to date is highest amongst young children under 5 years of age. This is similar to the trend seen across Canada. Pregnant women, babies, young children, and older adults (over 65) are at higher risk for developing serious complications and being hospitalized from the flu.

The flu is a serious illness that affects the breathing system. It starts suddenly and often lasts longer than a cold. Symptoms include: fever, headache, body aches, chills, tiredness, weakness, cough, runny eyes, stuffy nose and sore throat.

#### **Prevent the spread of the flu**

In addition to getting the flu shot, you should also take everyday precautions which include:

- Washing your hands often with soap and warm water
- Using an alcohol-based hand rub if there is no soap and water
- Covering coughs and sneezes
- Not touching your face
- Staying home when you are sick
- Cleaning shared objects and surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches or keys often. The flu virus can live on surfaces for up to 8 hours.
- Not sharing food, drinks or personal items like toothbrushes
- Resting, sleeping, being active and eating nutritious food

#### **Quick Facts**

- Ontarians six months of age and older can get flu shot from their primary care provider (family doctor, nurse practitioner, or walk-in clinic).

- Anyone five years of age and older can also get their flu shot from a participating pharmacy. [Where to get the flu shot in Hamilton.](#)

#### Additional Resources

[Information about the flu and where to get the flu vaccine](#)

[Information about flu activity in Ontario](#)

[Information about flu activity in Canada](#)

#### Quotes

“While overall flu activity in Hamilton is still relatively low, it is increasing meaning it is still a good time to get the flu shot. Getting the flu shot also protects people around you, such as young children and seniors, who are at greater risk of getting seriously ill from the flu. It’s also important to take everyday precautions during the respiratory virus season including regular handwashing.”

Dr. Ninh Tran

Associate Medical Officer of Health

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