

Workplace Tips

Employers

H1N1 Influenza is a new virus that has symptoms similar to seasonal flu, but can quickly develop into breathing problems. H1N1 Influenza is spreading easily from person to person globally.

Prevention

Hand hygiene is the single most important way to prevent the spread of infections.

Wash hands frequently with warm water and soap for at least 15 seconds.

If hand washing facilities are not available, have 60-90% alcohol-based hand sanitizer available, especially in public areas.

Post signs in washrooms and kitchen areas to remind staff to wash hands. Signs are available at www.healthunit.biz/SRI%20Mexico.asp.

Absenteeism

Business continuity planning can help you prepare for increased absenteeism during influenza season due staff members off ill or caring for their children or other family members. Resources are available at www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/influenza/bcp-eng.php or www.peelregion.ca/health/bcp/.

Distancing

To further reduce flu transmission, consider replacing in-person business meetings with teleconferencing, and allow employees to work from home where possible.

Illness

Remind staff that if they do become ill, they should stay home. Review attendance and paid-time-off policies to ensure they don't feel pressured to report to work when ill.

Environmental Cleaning

The influenza virus can survive for 8 to 48 hours on different surfaces. Frequent cleaning of surfaces or items commonly touched can help reduce the spread of the virus.

- The influenza virus is easily killed by regular cleaning with commercially available cleaning products and does not require special cleaning agents or disinfectants.
- Clean each phone, especially in common areas and after each shift
- Regularly clean all common areas, counters, desk tops, door handles, railings, computer keyboards and mice, sinks, washroom utilities, etc. daily, or more frequently as necessary
- Individual headsets should be available
- Consider removing all magazines/newspapers from reception areas or common rooms.



Employees

There are many things you, as an employee, can do to protect yourself and prevent H1N1.

Wash hands often

Wash your hands with soap and warm water often during the work day and use hand sanitizer to supplement hand washing.

Distance yourself

During a flu pandemic, it is wise to maintain a distance of at least 2 metres, or two arm lengths, from co-workers and customers to reduce the likelihood of contracting H1N1 through a cough or sneeze droplet.

Arrange for help

Make arrangements for someone to help at home in case you or members of your family become ill. Create a back-up plan in case your children must remain home because they are ill.

H1N1 Symptoms

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills and fatigue
- Children under 5 may have vomiting and/or diarrhea



You may need urgent medical care if you have: difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, chest pain, severe or persistent vomiting, are an adult with a high fever for more than two days, are a child with severe tiredness, or have confusion or difficulty waking an ill person. Seek medical care or phone Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000.

Returning to Work

If you become ill, stay away from work until you no longer have a fever and you feel much better. If you work in a healthcare setting, stay home for seven days from the onset of symptoms.

More Info

North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit

Phone: (705) 474-1400 North Bay
(800) 563-2808 Burk's Falls
(705) 746-5801 Parry Sound

Toll Free: 1 (800) 563-2808

Web: www.healthunit.biz