



Questions and Answers Sporting Events and H1N1

Q: How is H1N1 spread?

A: The H1N1 flu spreads just like the seasonal flu:

- person-to-person through coughing and sneezing; and
- contact with contaminated surfaces such as handles, doorknobs, counters and telephones.

Q: What are the symptoms?

A: The H1N1 flu virus causes symptoms similar to the seasonal flu. Key signs and symptoms include:

- Fever (38°C)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose

Other symptoms may include:

- Body aches
- Headaches
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Diarrhea or vomiting

If you have these signs and symptoms, stay at home and avoid close contact with others for **7 days** after your symptoms begin or until you have been **symptom-free for 24 hours**. Do not travel, go to work or school when sick.

Q: How can we slow the spread of the flu?

A: To help slow the spread of the seasonal flu and H1N1, everyone should:

- Stay home if you have influenza-like illness for at least a week or until symptoms resolve.
- When sick, limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or cough or sneeze in your sleeve. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Hand sanitizers are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way. Try to avoid close contact with sick people.



Q: What should you do if you think you have H1N1?

A: If you think you have H1N1, call the Influenza Hotline at 1-888-920-3026 or the Health Line at 1-888-255-1010. You should only go to the emergency room or health clinic if your symptoms get worse or you have a chronic disease, pregnant, under 5 years old, or are over 65.

Q: Where can I get up-to-date information on H1N1?

A: For the latest information on H1N1, visit the Health and Social Services website at www.hltss.gov.nt.ca or call the Influenza Hotline at 1-888-920-3026 or the Health Line at 1-888-255-1010.

Q: What steps can sport organizers take to help prevent participants, coordinators, and chaperones from getting sick?

A: There are a number of steps organizers can take to prevent the spread of illness at all times and not just during a flu pandemic. These steps include:

- ensure that there are adequate hand-washing stations and hand sanitizers for event participants and that there is signage to remind people of the proper hand-washing technique;
- encourage good hygiene by providing all organizers, participants, and chaperones with educational material (i.e. posters or brochures) and reminders about covering coughs and sneezes; washing hands with soap and water; and not sharing drinks, food or chapstick;
- keep additional tissue supplies and waste receptacles at the venue;
- have all coordinators, chaperones and organizers on alert to recognize flu symptoms and isolate anyone with flu symptoms;
- arrange to have parents/guardians pick-up sick participants as quickly as possible;
- get any organizers, chaperones, or coordinators who are ill to go home, and if that is not possible, ensure they self-isolate;
- if you have out-of-town participants, have a room with a cot available in case somebody gets sick and needs to be isolated; and
- advise all participants, organizers, coordinators, chaperones and families that sick people must stay at home until at least 24 hours after they no longer have flu symptoms. It is especially important that they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever. This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medicines, like any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen.



Q: What happens if a participant becomes sick while en route to/from or at the organized event?

A: Participants who are feeling somewhat sick before an event should not attend. If the participant becomes sick during the event, the person should be isolated right away. Participants who are competing in their home town should be picked up by a family member right away. Out-of-town participants should be isolated from the other participants.

Q: Who will pay for a participant to go home early if he/she becomes sick?

A: Out-of-town participants who become sick while at a sporting event should not be sent home immediately. Travel should be avoided while sick. Participants from out-of-town should be isolated from the other participants. If the participant must travel while sick, the participant should wear a surgical mask or a bandana over the nose and mouth to avoid making other people sick.

Q: Will families be notified if a participant becomes sick at an event?

A: Organizers should work with chaperones to advise parents/guardians if a participant becomes ill at an event. Participants who are competing in their home town should be picked up by a family member right away. Out-of-town participants should be isolated from the other participants.

Q: Should we cancel sports events because of H1N1?

A: There is no need at this time to cancel sports events. Simple precautions at the individual level, like frequent hand washing, coughing and sneezing into the arm instead of hands, and staying home when sick will help slow the spread of the H1N1 flu virus.

Q: I hear Edmonton Soccer is banning shaking hands after the game. Should we do the same?

A: Banning shaking hand after the game is not necessary; however, all participants should be encouraged to wash their hands after each game, and to avoid touching their mouth, nose and eyes to avoid spreading germs.