

NEWS RELEASE
Monday, November 23, 2009



For immediate release

Vaccination Clinics Open for Everyone

H1N1 vaccination clinics in Sunrise Health Region are now open to everyone of all ages, with the exception of infants under six months of age. Primary care givers and people routinely in close contact with infants less than six months of age should be vaccinated to protect infants.

The vaccine dosage information for children has changed. A single half dose of vaccine is all that is needed for most children between three years and 10 years of age. Children between six months of age and three years and children with underlying chronic health conditions need a second half-dose of vaccine to achieve sufficient immunity. The second dose should be given no sooner than 21 days after the first needle.

The clinics in Sunrise Health Region are occurring in many communities and schools but it is not possible to reach all parts of the health region with the number of available staff and volunteers. Clinics held in schools are open to the general public. People may need to travel to the closest community to receive their H1N1 vaccination. Clinic locations can be accessed on the Sunrise Health Region website www.sunrisehealthregion.sk.ca and on recorded telephone message at 1-866-800-5510. Everyone who wishes to be vaccinated will have the opportunity, but once clinic attendance drops, the region will hold vaccine clinics on fewer locations.

Pandemic illness typically travels in waves approximately six weeks from the end of one wave to the start of the next. Canada is in the midst of the second wave of illness. The illness is proving mild for the majority of the population but some deaths related to H1N1 have occurred and include previously healthy adults and children.

Vaccination is recommended even if a person has recovered from H1N1 illness. It is difficult to know if sufficient immunity is generated from mild or moderate cases to protect persons from the virus in subsequent waves of illness. Vaccination is the surest form of protection.

The majority of people will recover within seven days at home with self-care. If you suspect you are sick with influenza, stay home until symptoms have ended, get plenty of bed rest, drink lots of fluids and eat good nutritious foods. Treat fever and cough with over the counter treatments and keep your home free of cigarette smoke which is particularly hard on persons with respiratory illness. To protect others in your household, use separate towels, frequently clean common household surfaces and items such as

remote controls or telephones with common household cleaners. Use a mask within six feet of other people or cover your cough with a tissue and discard immediately after using. Wash hands often or use an alcohol based hand sanitizer. Once you are well, get vaccinated for H1N1 as you may not have developed sufficient immunity during your illness.

Most of the time H1N1 illness will present with symptoms similar to other forms of influenza, beginning with a sudden onset of a cough and or fever. Other symptoms can, but not always, include fatigue, muscle aches, sore throat, headache, decreased appetite, runny nose and sometime can include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea.

If a person develops the following symptoms, they need to see a health care provider right away:

- Shortness of breath, rapid or difficulty breathing
- Chest pain
- Bluish or grey skin color
- Bloody or coloured mucus/spit
- Sudden dizziness or confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- High fever lasting more than three days
- Low blood pressure

Additional symptoms to watch for in children:

- Not drinking enough fluids or eating
- Not waking up or interacting
- Irritability; not wanting to play or be held.

-30-

For more information, please contact:

Sharon Tropin, Director of Communications

306.786.0144