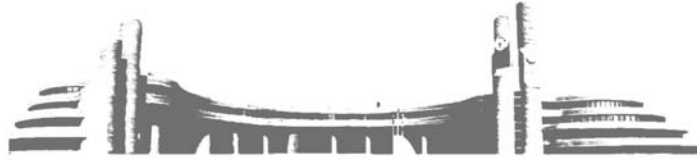


Tuesday, November 3, 2009

For Immediate Release



## York Region opens its first Community Flu Assessment Centre

*City of Vaughan centre will help assess patients experiencing influenza-like illness; reduce impact on local hospitals, physicians and the community*

**NEWMARKET** – The Regional Municipality of York will open its first Community Flu Assessment Centre (CFAC) today, located at 9401 Jane Street in the City of Vaughan.

Included in York Region’s public health pandemic plan are Community Flu Assessment Centres, used during a pandemic influenza outbreak to alleviate pressures and congestion from local hospitals. The CFAC also provides residents who are suffering from influenza with another option for assessment and treatment.

“Opening a Community Flu Assessment Centre expands the Region’s response to H1N1 and allows emergency rooms to focus on treating people who are critically ill or have life-threatening illnesses or injuries,” said Dr. Karim Kurji, York Region’s Medical Officer of Health. “This enables us to bring a variety of health workers together to assist people in the community who are not able to manage their flu symptoms at home.”

### Who should attend a community flu assessment centre?

Most people who get the flu will be able to manage their symptoms at home, but some people may need further assessment by a health care provider. Symptoms of the flu include the acute onset of fever (over 100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) and a cough combined with a sore throat, muscle aches and/or joint pain and weakness.

If you have concerns about symptoms, you should contact your family physician or call **Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week**. Residents who do not have a family doctor or are unable to get an appointment can attend the Community Flu Assessment Centre at the location and hours listed below.

Location	Dates and Times
9401 Jane Street City of Vaughan	<b>Seven days a week opening Tuesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup></b> Monday to Thursday 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

A CFAC evaluates the needs of each individual and triages influenza patients. Patients are seen on a first come, first serve basis and are assessed by a registered nurse experienced in acute care. Patients who require immediate medical care will be fast-tracked. The Centre will be managed by on-site York Region public health staff.

Individuals who are identified as ill at this location may:

- Be sent home with education on self-care
- Receive anti-viral (either medication or prescription)
- Be transported to an alternate care facility (Emergency or Hospital Flu Assessment Centre)
- Be referred to family physicians in the community who have agreed to see referrals from the centre; this may include family physicians and/or urgent care physicians at the Urgent Care Facility located at the Vaughan location

The CFAC in the City of Vaughan is a unique model as it is located within the MD Urgent Health Care Centre. The hours of operation of the Community Flu Assessment Centre are coordinated with the hours of the health care centre, ensuring those that are assessed at the clinic will have access to the immediate care they may need.

“Prevention through the mass H1N1 flu virus immunization program already underway in York Region, combined with the opening of this CFAC assessment and treatment centre, succeeds in meeting our commitment to reducing the impact of flu in our community,” added Dr. Kurji.

Two additional Community Flu Assessment Centres are in development to help assist people across the Region, including one additional centre in southern York Region and another in the northern portion of the Region.

**York Region Community Flu Assessment Centres will not offer the H1N1 flu vaccination. There are five H1N1 immunization clinics located across York Region. Some groups of people are at higher risk of contracting H1N1, developing complications from H1N1 or passing the flu to other higher-risk people. For this reason the H1N1 vaccine is currently only available to these groups.**

Updated clinic information is available at [www.york.ca/H1N1](http://www.york.ca/H1N1)

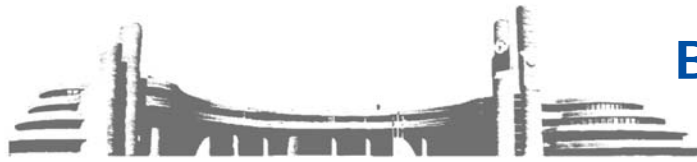
For updated information on this year's flu season, please visit [www.york.ca/H1N1](http://www.york.ca/H1N1) or contact York Region Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653.

***Due to the sensitive nature of this assessment centre, members of the media will not be allowed to enter while on assignment. Filming within the facility is also prohibited.***

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Tuesday, November 3, 2009

For Immediate Release

## York Region Community Flu Assessment Centres: What to do if you have symptoms

### Symptoms of H1N1 flu virus

Symptoms of the H1N1 flu virus feel very much like the regular seasonal flu. Symptoms may include:

- The acute onset of respiratory symptoms with fever (over 100 degrees Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius) and cough
- Sore throat
- Muscle aches
- Joint pain or weakness

If you are experiencing influenza-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, joint and muscle pain, headache) you should stay home until your fever is gone and you are feeling well.

Residents are encouraged to reduce the spread of the H1N1 flu by practising good hand hygiene and cough and sneeze etiquette (cough into your arm or sleeve), as well as by staying home when sick.

### When you should seek medical care?

If you are concerned about your symptoms, please contact your family doctor's office first or call **Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.**

It is important to know when to get medical help. These symptoms signal a need for urgent care:

- Difficulty breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- High fever in adults that lasts more than two days
- Severe tiredness in a child
- Confusion or difficulty waking an ill person

### Who should attend a H1N1 influenza assessment clinic?

For residents who do not have a family doctor or are unable to get an appointment, they can attend the community flu assessment centre.

***If your symptoms get progressively worse and you experience shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, go to your nearest hospital emergency department.***

Please note the Community Flu Assessment Clinic will not be offering H1N1 influenza vaccine.

### What is anti-viral and how does it work?

An anti-viral helps reduce the time a person is ill, reduce the symptoms and complications from the flu. If prescribed within the first 48 hours of onset of flu-like symptoms, it can reduce the impact by 50 per cent.

### What to do if your children are sick with flu?

If your child is suffering from the flu, you should seek medical care immediately if symptoms improve and then suddenly become worse. In addition, seek care if you notice any of the following signs:

- fast or difficult breathing
- bluish or dark-coloured lips or skin
- drowsiness to the point where he or she cannot be easily wakened
- severe crankiness or not wanting to be held
- dehydration – not drinking enough fluids and not going to the bathroom regularly

## How to care for yourself?

If you get the flu, you can do some things to make yourself feel better and avoid spreading the virus to others. Stay home and get plenty of rest. Clean your hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, particularly after coughing or blowing your nose. To ease the symptoms of flu:

- drink lots of fluids
- avoid drinks with caffeine
- take basic pain or fever relievers
- do not give acetylsalicylic acid (ASA or Aspirin) to children or teenagers under the age of 16
- 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
- avoid alcohol and tobacco

## On-line self-assessment tool

To help Ontarians decide what to do when they think they may have the flu, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has developed an on-line self-assessment tool:

<http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/ccom/flu/h1n1/public/tools/assessment/default.aspx>

This tool will help you learn whether you or your child has symptoms of the flu. It will also help you decide what to do next.

Caution should be exercised. This self-assessment tool is intended to provide guidance only and is not intended to provide medical advice about the treatment of you or your child or about the circumstances of your condition or your child's condition. Consult your physician for any questions that you may have about you or your child's condition.

## For More Information

For updated information on this year's flu season, please visit [www.york.ca/H1N1](http://www.york.ca/H1N1) or contact **York Region Health Connection** at 1-800-361-5653.

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