



MEDIA RELEASE



Thursday, October 27, 2011

Annual seasonal influenza campaign begins October 29

Flu shots available to all York Region residents over six months of age

NEWMARKET –The Regional Municipality of York encourages all residents to get their influenza vaccine as early as possible to protect against the flu this season.

Seasonal flu vaccine will be available at no cost to York Region residents at [public health influenza clinics](#) in York Region from Saturday, October 29 to December 2, 2011. Residents may also get the vaccine from their family physician, participating workplaces, pharmacies and other locations offering public flu clinics.

“The influenza vaccine provides the best protection against the flu virus every year,” said Dr. Karim Kurji, York Region’s Medical Officer of Health. “All residents, especially those at high-risk, are encouraged to get the vaccine and to take other precautionary measures to avoid getting sick.”

Flu immunization is highly recommended for people at high risk of flu-related complications, including:

- Adults and children with chronic health conditions
- People 65 years of age or older and residents of nursing homes and other chronic care facilities
- Healthy pregnant women
- Healthy children six to 23 months of age
- Aboriginal people

Essential community service providers and others who are in regular contact with people at high risk are also strongly encouraged to get the influenza vaccine.

Seasonal influenza vaccine has been shown to prevent illness in approximately 70 to 90 per cent of healthy children and adults. The flu is much worse than a cold. Even healthy young people can become very sick.

Flu season generally runs from mid-November to April each year. Influenza-like illnesses are caused by viruses that are easy to catch and easy to spread. Flu symptoms include headache, chills and cough followed quickly by fever, loss of appetite, muscle aches, fatigue, running nose, sneezing, water eyes and sore throat. Children may also develop nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. The flu can also lead to more serious illnesses which may result in hospitalization or even death.

A flu shot coupled with good infection and prevention practices such as proper and frequent hand washing, cough/sneeze etiquette and staying home from work/school when you are sick, can minimize the risk of illness for residents and their families this flu season.

For more information on influenza and a complete list of community influenza clinics, please visit www.york.ca/flu or call **York Region Health Connection** at **1-800-361-5653** or **TTY 1-866-252-9933**.

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Founded in 1971, The Regional Municipality of York is made up of nine municipalities and provides services to more than one million residents, 29,000 businesses and 495,000 employees.