

September 8, 2009

Dear Parent and/or Guardian,

RE: Pandemic (H1N1) 2009

In response to the Pandemic (H1N1) 2009, the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit is working with schools and school boards to keep our school population healthy. Controlling the spread of influenza in the school population can help reduce the overall spread in the community.

As school begins for another year, we are encouraging you to teach your children how to avoid spreading influenza (as outlined on the reverse side of this letter). If your child is sick with influenza-like-illness (symptoms such as fever and cough) please keep him or her home from school and daycare. Sick children and teens should not go to public places including sporting activities and social clubs.

When your child or adolescent is sick with influenza-like symptoms, please let your school's office assistant know that they have these symptoms. Each school will report absenteeism due to influenza-like-illness to the Health Unit. This will help the Health Unit monitor the amount of illness in the community.

Please note that if your child becomes sick during the school day, you will be contacted and asked to pick him or her up as soon as possible. To prevent spreading illness, it is recommended that your child be separated from others until he or she is picked up from school.


For further information on Pandemic (H1N1) 2009, please visit our website at: [www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org)

If you have questions or concerns, please call the Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 to speak with a Public Health Nurse.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

THE CORPORATION OF THE LEEDS, GRENVILLE  
AND LANARK DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT



Anne O. Carter, MD, MHSc, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer

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*"It is better to build children than to repair adults."* **author unknown**

**Health ACTION Line 1-800-660-5853**  
**Brockville Office 613-345-5685**  
**[www.healthunit.org/school](http://www.healthunit.org/school)**

# Avoiding the Spread of Pandemic (H1N1) 2009

## Important information for parents and caregivers

Currently, influenza A H1N1 virus is causing a global pandemic and is known as Pandemic (H1N1) 2009. It is a respiratory illness that causes symptoms similar to those of the regular seasonal influenza (e.g. fever, cough).

Washing your hands is the single most important way to prevent influenza. You should wash your hands for at least 15 seconds with soap and warm water or use a hand sanitizer in the following situations:

### Before:

- touching your eyes, nose or mouth in any way.
- eating, preparing food or feeding others.

### After:

- coming into contact with a person who has influenza or with their immediate environment.
- blowing your nose or wiping a child's nose, coughing or sneezing.

### There are everyday actions that you can take to stay healthy:

- Cover your nose and mouth with your sleeve when sneezing or coughing, if no tissue is available.
- Throw away tissues after sneezing, coughing or wiping your nose or your child's nose.
- Keep personal items separate if a household member has influenza.
- Do not share personal items or drinks.
- Maintain good health by drinking plenty of water, not smoking, exercising regularly and eating nutritious meals.

### Talk to a health care professional if you experience influenza-like symptoms, which can include:

- fever of more than 38°C
- shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- aching muscles and/or joints
- nasal congestion
- sore throat
- fatigue
- headache
- cough

**If your child is experiencing influenza-like symptoms (e.g. fever, cough), please keep him or her home from school, childcare centres, work, and/or recreational activities such as sports and social clubs. Avoid going to the emergency department unless you are recommended to do so by your primary care provider or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000).**

**For more information, contact the Health Unit at  
1-800-660-5853 or 613-345-5685  
or visit our website at [www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org)**