

Treating Pandemic Flu: What Your Health Care Provider Will Need to Know and May Ask You to Do

This fact sheet provides guidelines on what health care providers need to know and may ask you to do during flu pandemic.

Taking Care of Yourself at Home

During a pandemic, it will be difficult to get medical attention. Therefore, it is important to be prepared to take care of yourself and others at home as this can relieve most of your symptoms and reduce the risk of spreading the disease. For more information, see the fact sheets [“Staying Healthy During a Flu Pandemic”](#) and [“Taking Care of Yourself – During a Flu Pandemic”](#). Call your health care provider right away, however, if you experience flu symptoms and;

- Have heart or lung disease, or any other chronic health problems that require regular medical attention;
- Are elderly or frail;
- Have other illnesses;
- Are pregnant; or
- Are on treatments that affect your immune system (e.g., diabetes, cancer HIV/AIDS).

Seeking Medical Attention

If you do not start to feel better in a few days or your symptoms get worse, you should call Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000 (TTY 1-866-797-0007) or go to an assessment and/or treatment centre, which will be set up during a pandemic. Always call your health care provider and let them know about your symptoms before visiting, so that you don't infect other people at the office.

Make a List of Your Flu Symptoms

It is important to keep track of your or your family member's symptoms over the course of the illness so you can provide details over the phone. Your health care provider may ask you if you or your family member have any of the following symptoms, and when you experienced them:

- Fever;
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath;
- Pain or pressure in the chest or stomach;
- Confusion or disorientation;
- Bluish or unusually dark-coloured lips or skin colour;
- Mucus or phlegm in cough;
- Severe vomiting or vomiting that does not go away; or
- Symptoms that suddenly improve and then suddenly become worse.

Other Information Your Health Care Provider Will Need to Know

They will also need to know whether:

- You have travelled in the last 14 days, and if so, where;
- You have had any contact with a sick person who has travelled in the last 14 days, and if so where; or

- Other people in your family, work, or social settings have similar symptoms.

Visiting the Doctor’s Office or Clinic

If your doctor determines that you need to come into the office, you may be asked to take one or more of the following precautions to limit the spread of the virus:

- Once at the office, the doctor may ask you to wear a surgical mask that securely covers your nose and mouth.
- Sit in a separate room or area.
- Cough and sneeze into a tissue and throw it away afterward and then wash your hands with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer containing 60 per cent to 90 per cent alcohol.

Special Pandemic Flu Clinics

Your community may set up community assessment centres for you to call or visit instead.

If this happens, the health care provider may not be able to consult your medical records. Therefore, in addition to being able to describe your symptoms, your recent travel history, and any other ways you may have been exposed to the virus, it is important that you are able to provide the following information for yourself and other family members:

- Allergies;
- Immunizations;
- Past and current medical conditions; and
- Current medications and drug dosages.

To learn more on how to create a flu pandemic plan, see the [“Preparing for a Flu Pandemic: Making Individual and Family Plans” fact sheet](#) on the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Health Care website.

For More Information

Visit our website at

www.health.gov.on.ca/pandemic

INFOline 1-866-801-7242

TTY 1-800-387-5559