

**GOVERNMENT WORKERS IN NON
HEALTHCARE SETTINGS: Summary of
Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines
for Influenza Like Illness (ILI) including
NOVEL A/H1N1 INFLUENZA**

These Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines are intended to guide government workers in non-health care settings. At the present time, novel A/H1N1 influenza virus appears to be transmitted in the same manner as other influenza virus strains.

Influenza spreads easily from person to person by coughing or sneezing, by hand-to-hand contact with an infected person, or after handling objects contaminated by infected people. The virus can survive on hard surfaces for up to 48 hours, on cloth, paper or tissue for up to 12 hours and on hands for about five minutes, long enough for you to inadvertently touch your mouth, nose or eyes and transfer the virus to your body. People can spread influenza up to 24 hours before symptoms appear and up to seven days after. Not everyone who gets influenza develops symptoms but they still may be able to spread it to others, especially if they cough or sneeze. Individuals with symptoms of influenza may be contagious for up to a week.

Definition of Influenza-like Illness:

A person with:

- Fever* greater than 38°C AND cough AND one or more of sore throat, joint/muscle aches, or weakness / severe fatigue**

*In individuals age less than 5 or 65 years and older on acetaminophen or corticosteroids, fever may not be prominent.

**In children less than 5 years of age, gastrointestinal symptoms may also be present. Cough may not be prominent in young children.

Assessing the Situation:

All workers should follow routine measures to prevent spread of infection as outlined in section A below when interacting with clients. All workers, prior to any interaction with clients, should assess their risk by noting whether the

client has symptom(s) of ILI as described above. If ILI symptoms are present, the worker also should follow the precautions outlined in section B below.

A. Routine measures to prevent spread of infection

Hand Hygiene:

- Workers should perform hand hygiene regularly. Soap and water is preferred, however where soap and water are not available, hand sanitizers are an acceptable alternative if hands are not visibly soiled.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth to reduce the spread of germs.

Cough Etiquette:

- Workers should follow cough etiquette practices (coughing into sleeve, using tissues) and immediately performing hand hygiene.

General Advice:

- Workers with ILI symptoms should stay home from work and limit contact with others to reduce the chance of infecting them.

B. Precautions for interacting with clients experiencing ILI symptoms

- Clients with ILI should be advised to reschedule their appointment if feasible or receive service via another method not involving face-to-face contact with worker i.e., telephone or online service provision.
- If clients are experiencing symptoms of ILI and are not able to reschedule their appointments, they should be encouraged to call ahead to seek alternate service arrangements.
- Workers should maintain a spatial separation from clients with ILI symptoms of ideally 2 metres but a minimum of 1 metre if face to face contact is taking place.
- Workers do not need to mask if the symptomatic individual wears a mask. If the symptomatic individual is unable or unwilling to wear a mask and the spatial separation cannot be maintained as described above, then the worker should wear a mask.

Duration of Precautions:

- The precautions outlined in section B above should be continued by workers interacting closely with individuals experiencing ILI symptoms from the time they develop symptoms of ILI to 7 days afterwards and symptoms are no longer present.

Cleaning:

- In non-health care settings, including home settings routine cleaning of frequently used pieces of equipment and surfaces is sufficient.

Where can I get more information?

- For additional information on H1N1 Influenza, please see: www.manitoba.ca
- For more information on influenza and self care, contact Health Links-Info Santé at 788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257 or your primary health care provider.