

# H1N1 Flu Information



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## Effective Cleaning of Play Areas and Toys for Early Learning and Child Care Centres

*The following infection prevention guidance on environmental cleaning should be considered routine practices. No additional precautions are required for environmental cleaning as a result of the pandemic H1N1 influenza virus.*

### Introduction

During the course of a day, play materials and equipment are typically used by many different children. Young children commonly place objects in their mouths. Therefore, special attention must be taken to reduce the spread of germs on toys and equipment that children use.

### Communal Toys

- Hard surface toys, activity counters and toy shelves should be washed and sanitized weekly or when visibly soiled.
- Toys in infant/toddler areas (if used that day) should be sanitized daily.
- A toy that a child has put in their mouth should be washed and disinfected before other children handle it. The toy (if dishwasher safe) can be cleaned in a dishwasher if heat stable (49°C/120° F).
- Stuffed toys should be discouraged for communal use. Stuffed toys that are available for children's play, should be limited to those that can be machine washed and dried.
- Mouth toys, such as musical instruments and toy thermometers should not be available for common use because of the challenges of properly cleaning these items.

### Dress-up clothes

- Dress-up clothes should be laundered weekly, unless visibly soiled.

### Water and Sand Tables

- Wash and sanitize sand and water toys daily.
- Put fresh water in a sanitized water table - morning and afternoon.
- Change sand or other mediums (rice, macaroni etc.) at least four times per year (or if rice/macaroni gets wet).
- Children should wash their hands before and after playing in a water or sand table.
- In the event of an infectious disease outbreak in a facility, water and sand tables should be put away.

### For more information:

- Manitoba Government flu website: [www.gov.mb.ca/flu](http://www.gov.mb.ca/flu)
- Infection Control Guidelines for Early Learning and Child Care Centres: [www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/pubs/healthypractices/infection-control.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/pubs/healthypractices/infection-control.pdf)