

# Pandemic Influenza

**A Guide to Pandemic Preparedness Planning  
for Early Learning and Child Care Facilities**

September 2009



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## INTRODUCTION

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Over the past several years, we have become more aware of the likely eventuality of a pandemic and its potential impacts on public health and the ability to maintain essential services. Pandemic influenza (flu) has the potential to cause a great deal of illness and death while affecting society's ability to function. Recognizing this, Manitobans – like others around the world – have been preparing to respond to a pandemic.

A flu pandemic starts with a new strain of flu virus to which people have little or no immunity. To be considered a pandemic, the new virus must be able to spread easily from person to person and cause illness in many of the people who are infected. When it spreads around the world, it is called pandemic influenza or pandemic flu. The World Health Organization (WHO) sets the pandemic alert level globally. The pandemic level is set based on the spread of the virus, not the severity of illness.

Manitoba Health and Healthy Living, in collaboration with the Manitoba Child Care Program (MCCP), is providing this information to all licensed facilities to help prepare for a pandemic. All service agencies have been asked to prepare a business continuity plan (BCP) to respond to interruption of “regular business” if a flu pandemic becomes severe. A BCP should identify all essential services that will have to carry on despite the disruption caused by a flu pandemic.

MCCP has developed its own business continuity plan, as have all government departments and programs. The functions performed by MCCP and in partnership with other contributing divisions within Family Services and Housing – such as Community Service Delivery and Provincial Services (Subsidy Program) – will continue in some fashion during a pandemic. If our BCP comes into effect, licensed facilities will be informed. It is difficult to predict how much disruption could occur, but MCCP and other service agencies will work to carry out their

main functions with minimal negative impact on child care in Manitoba.

All child care facilities should already have plans for various crises such as a natural disaster or an outbreak of violence nearby. However, child care facilities have not generally undertaken plans for a community-wide health emergency such as a flu pandemic. The World Health Organization (WHO) has alerted the global community that preparation is necessary. This document has been written to support licensed child care facilities in their planning. Individual facilities must consider their local community and work with members of their community to create an effective plan.

### **What is an Influenza (flu) Pandemic?**

Periodically, influenza viruses go through major genetic changes. This results in a completely new kind of influenza, to which people have little or no immunity. To be considered a pandemic, the new virus must be able to spread easily from person to person and cause illness in many of the people who are infected. When it spreads around the world, it is called pandemic influenza or pandemic flu.

A number of assumptions, based on previous pandemics and medical research, have been made for planning purposes. We are a considerably healthier population now than in the past and we have access to a wide range of interventions, such as antiviral drugs and vaccines supported by a highly developed health care system. We can also access information about flu and pandemics from around the world quickly and efficiently, which can help us to respond better and more quickly.

The information on the following page outlines the differences between seasonal flu and pandemic flu.

	<b>Seasonal Flu</b>	<b>Pandemic Flu</b>
<b>When and Where</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every year during the winter months in Canada and the northern hemisphere.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occurs about three times a century and can take place in any season.</li> <li>• A pandemic is a global event.</li> </ul>
<b>Who</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affects Manitobans every winter.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affects more people than the seasonal flu – one-quarter or more of the world population.</li> </ul>
<b>How</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe illness and death are generally confined to people over age 65; people with existing medical conditions like lung diseases, diabetes, cancer, kidney or heart problems; people with weak immune systems and the very young.</li> <li>• Four thousand deaths in Canada and approximately 100 deaths in Manitoba are attributed to influenza each year. These are cases where flu is known or highly suspected to have played a role in a person’s death.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pandemic flu is associated with higher rates of illness and can result in a higher severity of illness and death.</li> <li>• Risk groups for severe illness may be different from those of seasonal flu.</li> <li>• The worst flu pandemic of the last century – the 1918 Spanish flu caused an estimated 30,000 to 50,000 deaths in Canada and 20 to 40 million deaths worldwide.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention: Vaccines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new vaccine is produced every year to provide protection from the types of influenza expected to circulate.</li> <li>• This is because strains of the flu virus can change over time and different strains can circulate each year.</li> <li>• The vaccine is effective because scientists are able to predict fairly reliably which types of flu virus will circulate, based on flu activity in other parts of the world.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A vaccine against a pandemic type of influenza will not be available at the start of a pandemic.</li> <li>• This is because the virus type will be completely new.</li> <li>• Once a pandemic is detected, scientists will identify the virus and a new vaccine is manufactured based on their findings.</li> <li>• It is expected that this new vaccine will take about six months to become available for targeted use.</li> </ul>
<b>Prevention and Treatment: Antivirals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Antiviral drugs can be used to treat and prevent the flu.</li> <li>• Antivirals are used to manage outbreaks in long-term care facilities and to a lesser extent, to protect and provide early treatment for people at risk of becoming seriously ill from flu.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Antiviral supplies will be limited and health care workers will be provided with direction on who should receive them.</li> <li>• Countries, including Canada, are stockpiling the antiviral drug oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) for use during a pandemic.</li> <li>• The use of antivirals will be guided by the spread and severity of the pandemic.</li> </ul>

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## IMPACTS OF A PANDEMIC – WHY PLAN?

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It is important for child care facilities to continue to operate and provide an environment that is as safe and healthy as possible for children during a pandemic. While some parents may choose to keep their children at home, many others – including those who are an essential part of Manitoba’s pandemic response – will continue to work and will require child care. A pandemic may have a gradual onset and will have prolonged effects, so it is important for services such as child care to remain available as usual for as long as possible and until the authorities dictate otherwise.

Impacts on the business continuity of specific child care services may not be evident immediately and facilities will have time to access information and make decisions. As more people become ill, this could decrease the number of staff working at a facility and reduce the level of service provided. This could happen gradually or quite quickly and it is important for your facility to plan how it will adjust.

Having a plan will help child care facilities to mitigate and prepare for the potential impacts of a pandemic, including:

1. sudden increase in staff and child absenteeism
2. usual services and supplies scaled back or not available – including hot lunch programs, transportation services, field trips or others
3. administration activities are changed or have to be reduced or cancelled
4. maintenance or cleaning services may change or not be available
5. interruption of supplies, such as milk delivery
6. reduction in outside supports, such as health services and other professional services
7. potential closure
8. financial losses due to decreased revenue and increased or additional costs
9. potential additional duties for employees
10. spread of infection within facilities and within the community

In your pandemic preparedness plan, all possible impacts should be considered. Explore and identify the actions that will help you adjust to these changes, as well as how these actions will be implemented.

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## GOVERNMENT PLANNING

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A number of acts are specifically designed to authorize governments to access emergency powers that are not normally available.

During a pandemic the following acts surpass the power of *The Community Child Care Standards Act and Manitoba Regulation 62/86*:

- *The Public Health Act* – gives public health officials in Manitoba the authority to take actions to protect the health of the public. If justified, this can include closing certain buildings or suspending public gatherings.
- *The Emergency Measures Act* – provides municipal government with access to emergency powers. After a majority vote, this legislation gives municipal councils greater authority including public evacuations, building closures, the ability to compel people to assist in an emergency and to trespass on property without a search warrant. The minister of Intergovernmental Affairs is responsible for the act and has the power to declare a state of emergency in places that are unable to hold a municipal council vote. The minister can also limit the powers used under this act.
- *The Emergencies Act* – gives the Government of Canada powers to respond to regional, national and international emergencies.

In the event of a pandemic, there will be central leadership and plans for province-wide action and communication. The lead authority for decision-making will depend on the circumstances and decisions required, but will likely be Manitoba Health and Healthy Living or the Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization.

A co-ordinated response from Manitoba Family Services and Housing and other provincial government departments will support licensed child care facilities and their pandemic response. Business continuity issues that are the direct responsibility of Manitoba Family Services and Housing – including operating grant funding, subsidy payments, regulatory and public health requirements and others – are addressed in the province’s BCP. Essential provincial and municipal government services and all essential health services will continue to operate. Each department has identified how it will continue services by analyzing business practices and anticipating issues and concerns that might interfere with business continuity.

Licensed child care facilities will receive official notification from government sources in a timely manner if emergency measures come into effect. Notification may be provided by email, telephone, fax, radio or in person to ensure the message is received.

Information about a flu pandemic will also be updated regularly on the province’s web site at [www.manitoba.ca](http://www.manitoba.ca).

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## BUSINESS CONTINUITY

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These guidelines are intended to help the child care sector understand the issues associated with a pandemic and to plan for business continuity. All licensed child care centres, licensed family child care homes and family child care group homes are included.

### **What should child care facilities do?**

A Business Continuity Plan (BCP) looks at all the functions of an organization, determines what functions are essential, what functions can be altered or put aside and develops contingency actions to continue essential services. To do this, an organization will have to review and document all activities needed to keep the child care facility open and functional in a safe and acceptable manner.

Consider the following questions:

- What skill sets are needed by child care staff? For example: additional training to take on new responsibilities and essential tasks that must be carried out by trained and/or untrained staff.
- Are alternate employees available if needed? For example: substitutes, parents or volunteers from community or faith-based organizations.
- What resources and supplies are necessary and available? For example: cleaning supplies, program supplies and routine-care supplies.
- Who will have the authority to make decisions? For example: board members, managers and lines of authority.
- What is the financial plan? For example: operating costs and payroll.
- What is the contingency plan? For example: secondary support systems, other nearby centres and homes or sharing supplies and staff.
- What alternative communication strategies need to be developed? For example: telephone and email trees or contact lists with a number of methods of contact.



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## PANDEMIC PLANNING AND CO-ORDINATION

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A co-ordinated community effort is needed to keep licensed child care facilities open during a flu pandemic.

Licensed facilities are encouraged to work with other licensed child care centres, nursery schools and family child care homes in their communities to form a Pandemic Co-ordination Team (PCT). The PCT could include a small number of facilities that are geographically near each other and near other services in the community. For example, a small rural community might have one PCT for all of its child care facilities, or several facilities in an urban area might join together as a PCT.

The PCT should establish a business continuity and pandemic preparedness plan together to share all resources, including human resources. For example, if only one of the facilities can remain open during the pandemic, the group could plan for all to contribute resources, including staff to keep the facility functioning.

The guidelines for forming a PCT are based on an organizational model for emergency planning developed by Manitoba Health and Healthy Living. Child care facilities form one team and move into action in the event of a pandemic to plan and provide optimal, safe child care. PCT members play a critical role to co-ordinate operations during a pandemic. It is essential that there are back-ups for the team leader and each team member.

### **What does a Pandemic Co-ordination Team (PCT) do?**

The pandemic co-ordination team (PCT) will:

- prepare pandemic plans
- organize preparedness activities
- provide response and recovery activities during and after a pandemic

It will be important to decide the PCT's level of authority, along with the tools and timelines it should use to report to other stakeholders – including public health officials, board members, directors, child care co-ordinators and others. Each community's PCT should also consider how to connect with other community groups, regional health authorities and local governments.

### **Who are the members of the PCT?**

Team members should represent a variety of interests from the child care community and other stakeholders, including:

- board members and management staff
- employees
- parent representatives
- community liaisons from agencies like health authorities, hospitals or community centres
- employee groups and other stakeholders, like the local school, faith-based organizations, unions or professional associations

The team leader has the necessary skills and is interested in taking on this responsibility. The PCT leader is charged with overseeing the activities of the team and the overall preparedness, response and recovery plan.

### **How is a plan created?**

To develop your plan, be sure to include these steps:

- Develop a schedule, including regular PCT meetings and timelines for plan completion.
- Delegate responsibilities for various tasks and administrative functions.

- Include timelines to report progress to management, boards and government representatives, either to obtain approvals or build awareness and support.
- Create a format so plan components have a similar look and feel, which will help make plans easier to use.
- Ask for input from professional associations, bargaining units, parent boards and associations, staff representatives, public health officials and government.
- Review your plan to make sure it is concise, user-friendly and easy to understand.
- Connect with appropriate government and non-government organizations with experience in emergency preparedness, to share ideas, information and suggestions. For example, the PCT could link with municipal and provincial government officials, the public health nurse and the local regional health authority.

### **How will the plan be communicated?**

A communications plan should be developed to reach internal and external stakeholders to:

- Keep management, staff, families and others aware of planning and the latest information on the pandemic. This may initially take the form of postings on bulletin boards, information in newsletters or reports at meetings.
- Develop a system to co-ordinate internal and external communications using a number of different methods, like telephone, email or local TV/radio/print media.

### **Develop a Plan**

Establish goals and objectives for the PCT to deal with the needs of the community.

Here are some key actions to consider when developing the plan:

1. Identify all licensed child care facilities in the group, the services provided and the impact of potential or anticipated problems. (For example: maintain routines and curriculum.)
2. Identify solutions and actions for each facility, including the people and resources needed. (For example: maintain staff-child ratios and access to supplies.)
3. Develop a contingency plan to continue service in a safe and acceptable manner. (For example: make adjustments to keep routines and create a staffing contingency plan.)
4. Develop a written work plan and/or checklist.
5. Identify people, resources, additional supports and additional costs to maintain the preparedness plan. (For example: costs to stockpile supplies, share supplies and plans to share staff.)
6. Create a written communication plan, including contact lists for both internal and external communications. Identify at least three different ways to contact individuals in the community.
7. Report the plan and gain approval from stakeholders.

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## INFECTION PREVENTION

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All child care facilities are required to follow guidelines for proper infection prevention. Infection prevention practices that are routinely and properly carried out are the best way to prevent the spread of illness among children and staff. These practices should be assessed and monitored routinely to ensure staff and children are consistently and carefully carrying them out. Following these practices on a day-to-day basis will help to maintain safe and healthy conditions.

During a flu pandemic, these routine health practices remain the same but should be carried out with additional diligence and reviewed with staff, children and families:

- proper sneezing and coughing etiquette
- adult hand washing procedures
- children's hand washing procedures
- diapering and toileting procedures
- cleaning and sanitizing procedures
- procedures for proper storage, handling and serving of food

If any additional infection prevention practices are required, Manitoba Health and Healthy Living will advise Manitoba Family Services and Housing who will communicate this to facilities. Information on infection prevention will also be available on the Manitoba government website at [www.manitoba.ca](http://www.manitoba.ca).

Manitoba Child Care Program's *Infection Control Guidelines for Early Learning and Child Care Facilities* and healthy routine practices posters are available under the Publications heading at [www.manitoba.ca/childcare](http://www.manitoba.ca/childcare). You can also call Child Care Information Services at 945-0776 (Winnipeg) or 1-888-213-4754 (toll free) to obtain copies.

Report the plan and gain approval from stakeholders.

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## PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLANNING CHECKLIST FOR EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE

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In the event of an influenza pandemic, child care facilities will play an important role in the protection of the health and safety of children and their families as well as staff. Adapt this checklist to address the specific needs and supports in your community.

### Planning and Co-ordination

- Form a Pandemic Co-ordination Team to produce a plan. Include members from different groups your program serves and stakeholders involved in the operation of the program. When possible, your team can be made up of several child care facilities in your area.
- Assign one member of the team to identify reliable sources of information and to monitor the latest news and public health advisories.
- Identify municipal and provincial contacts including your public health contact and your child care co-ordinator.
- Make sure your plan is in line with other plans in your community and with authorizing government agency plans (through your child care co-ordinator).
- Develop your action plan for business continuity from staffing through to supplies.
- Inform families of the plan and encourage them to consider what they will do in the event of a pandemic threat. What is their plan for care?
- Learn about resources and supports that are or will be available in your community so that you can inform families in need of assistance such as low income families or families whose first language is not English or French, etc.
- Share your plan with others and look for ways to evaluate and produce stronger plans by pooling resources, sharing information, etc.

## Program Operations and Administration

- Compile a list of substitute caregivers who will commit to work if needed. Draw from a number of sources including the boards, parent volunteers, existing substitutes, previous employees etc. Make sure all individuals on the list have completed an Investigation Authorization form, including the Criminal Records Check and the Child Abuse Registry Check.
- Develop a written plan for keeping in touch with staff members, substitute staff, families, your child care co-ordinator and other important contacts.
- Plan how you will deal with altered program delivery, staff absences and children's absences that would occur during a flu pandemic.
- Plan ways to continue basic functions if your program is closed or operations are decreased significantly. (For example, continue meeting payroll, receiving subsidies and grants, collecting fees if service is provided, etc.)
- In the case of prolonged children's absences, plan ways to keep in contact with families and ways families can be helped or supported at home in the care of their children. Keep an updated list of referral agencies and contacts.
- Keep a current contact list of suppliers and service providers. Find out what their plans for business continuity are in the case of a flu pandemic.
- Budget to provide an emergency supply of items that may be difficult to get during a pandemic.
- Cross-train staff and develop written instructions for essential tasks, keep a record of the location of important items and key information. For example: keys, passwords, control panels, etc.

## Communications Planning

- In your contact and resource list include several different methods for contacting people. (For example, you might use hotlines, telephone and email trees, text messaging, special websites, local radio and/or TV stations.) Test your contact methods to be sure they work.
- When you have completed your flu pandemic plan, make sure it is presented to all staff and families. Make sure they understand why a plan is needed. Give them opportunities to ask questions and make comments.
- Devote a space on your parent information bulletin board for articles, information and updates on a flu pandemic. Search for reliable internet sources of current information, such as Manitoba Health and Healthy Living or the Public Health Agency of Canada websites. Reduce incidences of anxiety, rumour, panic and misinformation.
- Provide families with information on such issues as infection prevention, exclusion policies, signs and symptoms, self care and care of ill family member, etc.
- Begin to identify resources to help staff and children deal with anxiety, grief and loss.
- Keep your child care co-ordinator informed of your progress and ask for assistance when needed.

## Infection Prevention Policies and Actions

- Ensure that *Infection Control Guidelines for Early Learning and Child Care Facilities* (available at [www.manitoba.ca/childcare](http://www.manitoba.ca/childcare)) is reviewed with all staff members. Ensure staff are aware to consistently use proper routine health practices and to increase monitoring of children's hand washing.
- Ensure that healthy routine practices posters are prominently posted in appropriate areas (available at [www.manitoba.ca/childcare](http://www.manitoba.ca/childcare)).
- Develop child exclusion and staff-leave policies that are non-punitive so that the ill person can stay home and only return when fully recovered. The staff person who has recovered is resistant to the disease and will be an asset to the program.
- Keep a good supply of things you will need to help limit the spread of infection. For example, keep on hand plenty of soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, tissues, disinfectants, etc.
- Teach staff and families how to limit the spread of infection. Develop a schedule to increase the frequency of cleaning and sanitizing of surfaces and toys during a pandemic.
- Teach staff about the symptoms of influenza and what to do if a child becomes ill.
- Arrange for a place where ill children and staff can be isolated until they leave the facility. Ensure a supply of fresh personal items is available; for example, bedding, towels, etc.
- Inform families that experts recommend yearly flu shots for all children six months to two years of age and anyone who cares for children in that age range. Find out where the nearest flu shot service will be in your area during a flu pandemic.
- Encourage staff to get annual flu shots and check the Manitoba government website at [www.manitoba.ca](http://www.manitoba.ca) for updates and information about the specific pandemic vaccine.
- Keep accurate records for reporting of absenteeism due to illness (staff and children) including the symptoms of their illness.

Adapted from *Child Care and Preschool Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist*, Department of Health and Human Services, USA

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## PERSONAL PREVENTATIVE PRACTICES

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Public health officials expect that a flu pandemic will spread in a similar fashion to the seasonal flu. The flu is very contagious, so it can spread quickly in families and communities. However, there are some steps you can take to reduce the risk of infection.

### **Improve your overall health**

In general, healthier people are better at fighting off disease. To stay healthy, you should eat healthy foods, get plenty of sleep, exercise and not smoke. Avoid heavy alcohol consumption and try to maintain a positive and balanced outlook.

### **Wash your hands often**

Washing hands is the most effective way of preventing the spread of disease. Get into the habit of washing your hands often with soap and warm water, scrubbing your wrists, palms, fingers, back of hands and nails for 10 to 15 seconds. Rinse and dry with a clean towel. This should be done before meals, after using the toilet and after you cough, sneeze or blow your nose. Teach children to do the same; however, young children may need help with hand washing. When soap and water are unavailable, hand sanitizers may be an acceptable alternative if hands are not visibly soiled.

### **Avoid visiting people who have the flu if practical to do so**

People who are ill should try to limit contact with others as much as possible. However, there may be times when this is not possible. To limit the spread of the virus, family members, caregivers, and other visitors, should:

- Wash their hands after being in direct contact with someone who has influenza (or any other respiratory infection).
- Wash their hands when arriving in the child care facility.
- Wash their hands and a child's hands after wiping a child's nose.
- Wash their hands after coughing, sneezing or wiping their nose.
- Wash their hands after touching objects handled by someone who has influenza.
- Clean surfaces (such as toys, bathroom taps and doorknobs) with household cleaners after an ill person has touched them.

### **Don't share**

Avoid sharing eating utensils, drinks or other items that come in contact with your mouth. If a household member becomes ill, keep their personal items (like towels and toothbrushes) separate from those of the rest of the family.



## **Take antivirals if recommended by your doctor**

Antivirals are drugs prescribed by doctors and are used for the prevention and early treatment of influenza. If taken shortly after getting sick (within 48 hours), they can reduce influenza symptoms, shorten the length of the illness and potentially reduce any serious complications. Antivirals work by reducing the ability of the virus to reproduce. However, they do not provide immunity from the virus. Manitoba follows national guidelines on who should receive antivirals. These are generally used only for severe cases of influenza or for individuals with underlying health conditions.

## **What if I think I have the flu?**

If you develop symptoms of influenza:

- Stay home from school, child care or work and limit contact with others.
- Contact your health-care provider or call Health Links – Info Santé if you are concerned that you may need advice or care or if you do not get better as you normally would (within two to three days).
- Obtain immediate medical care if your symptoms are severe or get worse – shortness of breath, dehydration, or severe weakness. If other symptoms such as cough or fever get worse, you should also see your health care provider.

## **Protect yourself and others**

- Cover a cough or sneeze by coughing or sneezing into your elbow or sleeve or using a tissue to cover your nose and mouth. Place the tissue in the garbage.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. When soap and water are unavailable, hand sanitizers may be an acceptable alternative if hands are not visibly soiled. Young children may need help with hand washing.
- Limit touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

If additional precautions are needed during a pandemic, Manitoba Health and Healthy Living will provide this information to Manitobans.

## **What about children?**

Children should take the same precautions as adults, including washing their hands regularly and covering their nose and mouth when coughing. Young children may need help with hand washing. Children with flu-like symptoms should stay home from school or child care. Routinely clean surfaces in areas where children play to reduce the spread of germs. Like adults, most children get better from influenza without any specific treatment. For more information on caring for people with influenza, including children, please see the fact sheet *Caring for Yourself and Others with Influenza* (formerly *Self Care and Influenza*), available on the Manitoba government website: [www.manitoba.ca](http://www.manitoba.ca).

## **DURING A PANDEMIC, IT WILL BE IMPORTANT TO:**

### **Follow directions from public health officials**

Direction and advice to the public, health care providers and others will be based on the immediate situation and will include actions people can take to help themselves, their families, their neighbours and their communities. These may change as more information becomes available about the characteristics of the particular virus causing the outbreak. Visit the Manitoba government website at [www.manitoba.ca](http://www.manitoba.ca) for information on pandemic influenza and important updates.

### **Follow infection prevention procedures if caring for a person with influenza**

Providing care to an individual with an influenza-like illness will be common during a pandemic. The likelihood of transmitting the disease is reduced by following basic precautions. Visit the Manitoba government website for updates.

## **Know how to care for yourself when you have the flu**

- Stay home and rest.
- Drink plenty of fluids and eat small, nutritious meals.
- Gargle with warm salt water if you have a sore throat.
- Use a cool mist humidifier to help with a stuffy nose. If a baby is having problems breathing because of a stuffy nose, use a rubber suction bulb to clear the mucous. You may also use saline nose drops or spray if the mucous is very thick.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water.
- Take acetaminophen (ex: Tylenol®, Tempra®). Use the dose and schedule recommended on the package or by your doctor or pharmacist. Ibuprofen (ex: Advil®, Motrin®) may be used for children older than six months and for adults.
- Do not give acetylsalicylic acid, also known as ASA, (ex: Aspirin®) to anyone under 18 years of age because it can lead to brain and liver damage (Reye's Syndrome).
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before using over-the-counter medication or giving them to anyone else. This is especially important if the person is under 12 years of age, is taking other medicines or has a chronic medical condition.

- Ask for help – you may need help at home until you are feeling better.
- For more information on how to care for someone with the flu, please see the fact sheet *Caring for Yourself and Others with Influenza* (formerly *Self Care and Influenza*), available on the Manitoba government website at [www.manitoba.ca](http://www.manitoba.ca).
- If you require further advice or are concerned that you may need care, do not hesitate to contact your health care provider or call Health Links – Info Santé at 788-8200 (in Winnipeg) or 1-888-315-9257 (toll free).

### **Should I wear a mask?**

Wearing masks is not recommended as a general measure.

### **When should I see a doctor?**

People who are normally healthy and have symptoms of influenza should seek medical attention as soon as possible if they experience any of the following:

- breathing is difficult or painful
- coughing up bloody sputum (phlegm or saliva)
- wheezing
- presence of fever for three to four days along with not getting better or getting worse
- sudden return of high fever and other symptoms after initial improvement
- extreme ear pain
- extreme sleepiness, difficult to wake up, or disoriented and confused

### **When should I seek medical care for a child?**

Almost all children with influenza have a fever. The degrees (or height) of a fever do not tell you how serious your child's illness is. How a child acts is usually a better sign. A child with a mild infection can have a high fever, while a child with a severe infection might have no fever at all.

It is recommended that you contact your doctor or take your child to an emergency department if your child has signs of influenza and:

- has lung or heart disease
- has an illness or is taking treatment that affects the immune system
- takes acetylsalicylic acid (ASA or Aspirin®) regularly for a medical condition or has a chronic illness requiring regular medical care
- has a fever and is less than six months old
- has a fever for more than 72 hours
- is excessively cranky, fussy or irritable
- is not interested in playing with toys or is unusually sleepy, listless or does not respond
- has trouble breathing when resting, is wheezing, has chest pain when breathing or is coughing excessively (a lot) or coughing up bloody sputum (phlegm or saliva)
- drinks very little fluid and has not urinated (peed) at least once every six hours when awake
- has vomited for more than four hours or has severe diarrhea
- has a fever and a rash or any other signs of illness that worry you
- is still not feeling better after five days or was feeling better and suddenly develops a new fever

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## CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

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The following is a list of contacts to support your pandemic planning as well as for further information and direction during a pandemic.

### Government of Manitoba

Visit the Manitoba government website at [www.manitoba.ca](http://www.manitoba.ca) for important documents and links.

Fact sheets and resources:

- *Influenza: Annual, Pandemic and Avian*
- *Preparing for Pandemic Influenza in Manitoba*
- *Public Health Measures During an Influenza Pandemic*
- *Vaccines and Antivirals*
- *Caring for Yourself and Others with Influenza (formerly Self Care and Influenza)*
- *Infection Control Guidelines for Early Learning and Child Care Facilities*
- Healthy routine practices poster series for early learning and child care
- *Manitoba Emergency Plan*

Links to co-ordinating agencies:

- Manitoba Public Health Division, Manitoba Health and Healthy Living
- Office of Disaster Management, Manitoba Health and Healthy Living
- Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization

### Regional Health Authorities of Manitoba

- Visit [www.manitoba.ca/health/rha/contact.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/health/rha/contact.html) for contact information or call Health Links – Info Santé at 788-8200 (in Winnipeg) or 1-888-315-9257 (toll free).

### Government of Canada

- Public Health Agency of Canada ([www.phac-aspc.gc.ca](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca))

### World Health Organization (WHO)

- WHO is the directing and co-ordinating authority for health within the United Nations system. It is responsible for providing leadership on global health matters as well as monitoring and assessing health trends.
- Visit their website ([www.who.int](http://www.who.int)) for a variety of current information

## Related Acts

- *The Community Child Care Standards Act* ([www.web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/c158e.php](http://www.web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/c158e.php))
- Child Care Regulation 62/86 ([www.web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/pdf/c158-062.86.pdf](http://www.web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/pdf/c158-062.86.pdf))
- *The Public Health Act* ([www.web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p210e.php](http://www.web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/p210e.php))
- *The Emergency Measures Act* ([www.web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/e080e.php](http://www.web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/e080e.php))
- *The Government of Canada Emergencies Act* ([www.dsp-psd.communication.gc.ca/Collection-R/LoPBdP/BP/prb0114-e.htm](http://www.dsp-psd.communication.gc.ca/Collection-R/LoPBdP/BP/prb0114-e.htm))

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## REFERENCES

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*Infection Control Guidelines for Early Learning and Child Care Facilities*, Manitoba Child Care Program, Family Services and Housing, 2007 ([www.manitoba.ca/childcare](http://www.manitoba.ca/childcare))

*Pandemic Influenza: Preparedness Guidelines for Manitoba School Divisions and Schools (K to 12)*, Manitoba Health and Healthy Living and Manitoba Education Citizenship and Youth, October 2007 ([www.manitoba.ca/influenza/pandemic/index.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/influenza/pandemic/index.html))

*Preparing for Pandemic Influenza in Manitoba: A Guide for the Public from the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health*, Manitoba Health, March 2006 ([www.manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/pandemic.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/pandemic.html))

*Vancouver Coastal Health Pandemic Influenza Plan*, Vancouver Coast Health, British Columbia, October 2006 ([www.vch.ca/pandemic/docs/title\\_page.pdf](http://www.vch.ca/pandemic/docs/title_page.pdf))

*What is a Pandemic Influenza?* HealthLink BC File #94a, Ministry of Health, British Columbia, May 2006 ([www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/hfile94a.stm](http://www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/hfile94a.stm))



