



Pandemic Influenza Preparedness

WHEN TO GET MEDICAL HELP

During a pandemic, essential health care services will continue in communities and cities, but may be at a reduced level. Most people will be encouraged to use self-care methods at home to take care of their symptoms.

If you have heart or lung disease, any other chronic condition that requires regular medical attention, if you are frail, or if you have an illness or are on treatments or medications that affect your immune system, talk to your doctor about precautions you can take before you get sick.

If your influenza symptoms get worse, you should get medical care right away. Call ahead to your doctor's office to let them know you are coming and that you have influenza. This will help them prepare for your arrival.

In children, seek medical care right away if you notice any of the following:

- Fast or troubled breathing
- Bluish lips or skin colour
- Not drinking enough fluids and/or not urinating regularly (about every 6 hours when awake)
- Listlessness, not waking up or interacting
- Severe irritability, not wanting to be held
- Symptoms (fever and cough) improve and then become worse
- Fever with a rash

In adults, seek medical care right away if you have any of the following:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or stomach
- Confusion or disorientation
- Coughing up bloody sputum
- Severe or lasting vomiting
- Symptoms (fever and cough) improve and then become worse

When you arrive at your doctor's office or the clinic, check in at reception. You may be asked to wear a mask so that you don't spread the virus to other patients. If special clinics for people with influenza or influenza-like symptoms have been set up, your doctor's office might ask you to go there for health care, and will tell you where clinics are located.