

November 16, 2022

RE: Actions you can take to help protect your child from respiratory illness

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Winter virus season has come early to Ontario and children and youth are currently at increased risk of a “triple threat” of viruses: RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus), influenza (flu) and COVID-19. It’s not too late to take action to reduce the risk of getting sick, developing severe illness, or spreading viruses to others.

Use multiple layers of protection against respiratory infections:

- **Get your child a flu shot and a COVID-19 booster as soon as possible.** Everyone 6 months and older can get a flu shot. Children 5 and older are also eligible for a COVID-19 booster. **Both flu shots and COVID-19 boosters can be received at the same time.**
- **Send children to school and child care with a well-fitted mask.** Masks are strongly recommended for everyone in indoor public places. Children under 2 should not wear a mask.
- **Keep sick kids at home.** Children may return to school and child care after they have no fever and symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (or 48 hours for nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea). Use the [school and child care screening](#) daily.
- **Remind children to cover coughs and sneezes, and wash hands often or use sanitizer.**
- **Clean commonly touched surfaces often.**

If your child or someone in your home is sick:

- **Go to a COVID, Cold and Flu Care Clinic if your doctor is not available and it is not an emergency.** Wait times at emergency rooms are long. You may be able to save time by [booking an appointment](#) in Brampton or Mississauga, including Malton, or in Orangeville for Caledon residents. If you are experiencing severe symptoms such as difficulty breathing, call 911 or go to the emergency department. If you have general questions or are unsure where to access care, call Health Connect Ontario at 811, available 24/7 in multiple languages.
- **Wear a mask at home if you have symptoms and can do so safely.** This will help to protect vulnerable people, including young children, the elderly or anyone immunocompromised, who live with you.

**Health
Services**

Office of the
Medical Officer
of Health

PO Box 667
RPO Streetsville
Mississauga, ON
L5M 2C2
tel: 905-799-7700

peelregion.ca

These actions can keep you and those you love from getting severely ill and help make sure our health care system can assist those who need urgent medical attention.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kate Bingham
Acting Medical Officer of Health

Important links:

Where to get flu shots: [Get Your Flu Shot - Region of Peel \(peelregion.ca\)](http://peelregion.ca)

Where to get COVID-19 boosters: [Get your vaccine - Region of Peel \(peelregion.ca\)](http://peelregion.ca)

How to protect your family from respiratory illness: [Protecting yourself and others from COVID-19 - Region of Peel \(peelregion.ca\)](http://peelregion.ca)

Find a compounding pharmacy for fever-reducing medications (call first): [Find a Pharmacy - Association of Compounding Pharmacists of Canada \(acpcrx.org\)](http://acpcrx.org)