



Community Partner Update

H1N1 FLU VIRUS

Nov. 27/09

Flu Report For week ending Nov. 21/09:

Flu activity in the District of Thunder Bay: sporadic. Cumulative deaths of H1N1 confirmed cases in Thunder Bay District: 3. From Aug.30/09 to Nov.14/09: Ontario=36; Canada=142

Significant Decline in Flu Activity: The Health Unit reports that flu activity in the District is declining. However, the Health Unit urges the public to get vaccinated! About 85% of the District population needs to be immune from the H1N1 virus to minimize its spread. We urge community members to protect each other from the H1N1 virus by getting a flu shot.

H1N1 & Seasonal Clinics Now On! Flu clinics have now been scheduled for the District and will continue until December 16th. Visit thunderbayflu.ca for dates and locations. At all flu clinics, both H1N1 and seasonal flu virus vaccines will be available. Also, **unadjuvanted** vaccine is now available to all pregnant women and to healthy individuals between 10 and 64 (upon request) at any of our flu clinics. Pregnant women over 20 weeks gestation can request **adjuvanted** vaccine but must provide a doctor's prescription or a letter from their midwife at the flu clinic.

Think You Had the Flu? Even if you "think" you had the flu, you need to be vaccinated to be sure to protect yourself and others from the disease. Only those who have had a confirmed case of H1N1 flu or Influenza A do not require a flu shot.

Breastfeeding & Immunization: Research indicates that breastfeeding your baby during a minor painful procedure (immunization, blood draw, etc.) is a safe and effective method of pain relief for the baby. For a list of reference articles visit Kellymom at www.kellymom.com/health/illness/bf--analgesia.html

National Flu Activity

Messages from Public Health Agency of Canada, Nov 25/09:

Although nationally, we have yet to reach the peak of the second wave of the virus, we are beginning to see a levelling off of influenza activity in many communities across the country. There are fewer positive flu tests and fewer flu outbreaks in schools.

The number of hospitalizations, of severe cases and of deaths are still increasing, although the rate of increase in hospitalizations is slower than in recent weeks.

Influenza remains unpredictable and this potential peak does not mean the pandemic is over.

Even with this levelling off in community activity, current activity levels are still well above the expected range for this time of year and risk of community transmission remains high.

Immunization remains our strongest line of defence against the H1N1 flu virus. The immunization programs rolling out across the country have the potential to make a strong impact on the way this virus behaves.

In communities where flu activity is still high, mass immunization can result in a more rapid levelling off of flu activity and an earlier peak. **In communities where flu activity is levelling off or possibly decreasing, immunization is still effective in reducing the risk of severe disease and death.**

Need more info? Contact the Infectious Diseases Program 625-8318 or 1-888-294-6630, ext 8318. Email Marsha.Sharpe@tbdhu.com.