Respiratory Illnesses
We are in that time of the year where the circulation of COVID-19, influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and the common colds tend to increase in the fall and winter each year. There are preventive measures we all can do to reduce infections and keep others safe.

Health prevention strategies to prevent the spread and minimize severity of illness are including:

- Hand washing with soap and water or hand sanitizers for minimum 20 seconds.
- Respiratory etiquette covers your mouth and nose with a tissue or upper sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Keep high touch surfaces clean (i.e. door handles, phones, light switches)
- Watch for signs of illness and stay home when you are sick. Children should not come to school or childcare if they have a fever, shortness of breath, vomiting, diarrhea, or are unable to perform the regular activities. Children can return to childcare or school when they have been fever free for at least 24 hours, free of vomiting, diarrhea and/or nausea for at least 48 hours, and no new symptoms are developing.
- Wear a well fitted medical/surgical or N95 mask in crowded indoor settings.
- Stay up to date with immunizations including COVID19 and Influenza. You can receive your COVID-19 vaccine doses at participating pharmacies.
- Antiviral treatment for COVID19 to eligible individuals may prevent severe illness. Paxlovid is an antiviral medication taken by mouth at home. Treatment must begin within five days of the start of symptoms. Antiviral treatment for influenza may be considered.

**How to get antiviral treatment**

If you have symptoms (even if mild), are at higher risk of severe COVID-19, have tested positive on a Rapid Antigen Test and are an adult contact either:
• a primary care provider (for example, a family doctor, nurse practitioner or your treating specialist)
• your local pharmacy to find out if there is a pharmacist available that can prescribe Paxlovid.

**Pediatric Care and other Resources**

The Brantford Childrens Walk-in Clinic provides specialized care for children as young as newborns and up to the age of 18. No appointment necessary and services are covered by OHIP. The clinic is located at 225 Fairview Drive, or call (519) 304-5460 [https://www.brantfordchildrensclinic.com/](https://www.brantfordchildrensclinic.com/)

Translating Emergency Knowledge for Kids [https://trekk.ca/](https://trekk.ca/) [https://trekk.ca/parentsandfamilies](https://trekk.ca/parentsandfamilies)

Resource of information for parents and caregivers that are based on the latest evidence and cover many common childhood illnesses.

**Brant Community Healthcare System** 200 Terrace Hill St., Brantford, Ontario N3R 1G9

**Pediatric Acute Referral Service**

This department sees children who need more urgent pediatric consultation in an acute care clinic. This allows community physicians, midwives and nurse practitioners to refer acutely ill children to the pediatrician on-call at the hospital. Children are also referred from the Emergency Department. Once a referral is sent and accepted by the pediatrician on-call, an appointment is booked.

**McMaster Children’s Hospital** Children’s Emergency Department at 1200 Main Street West, Hamilton, ON.

McMaster Children’s Hospital kids-only emergency department provides the most advanced care for infants, children and youth aged 17 and under who have a serious illness or injury.

**Other Resources**

As of January 1, 2023, pharmacists in Ontario are authorized to prescribe medications for 13 minor ailments including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allergic rhinitis</th>
<th>Herpes labialis (cold sores)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Candidal stomatitis (oral thrush)</td>
<td>Impetigo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conjunctivitis (bacterial, allergic and viral)</td>
<td>Insect bites and urticaria (hives)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dermatitis (atopic, eczema, allergic and contact)</td>
<td>Tick bites, post-exposure prophylaxis to prevent Lyme disease</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dysmenorrhea</td>
<td>Musculoskeletal sprains and strains</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)</td>
<td>Urinary tract infections (uncomplicated)</td>
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<td>Hemorrhoids</td>
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Please do not hesitate to reach out with any health concerns or questions we are available by phone at 905-768-1181. During the Holiday Break if you have tested positive for COVID19 and living in the community call Maggie RN Health Director at 905 516 7300. COVID19 is a Disease of Public Health Significance to Report.
Respiratory Illness FACTS

WHAT ARE RESPIRATORY ILLNESSES?
In Ontario, during the fall and winter there is more spread of respiratory viruses like influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and continued spread of COVID-19
- Respiratory viruses affect the airways and lungs
- Respiratory viruses spread easily from person to person
- Most people have mild symptoms that get better in a few days but some people get very sick

Treatment
- Antiviral treatment for COVID-19 and influenza is recommended for those at high risk of severe illness (elders, babies, young children, pregnant people, immunocompromised people, etc.)
- Babies and young children with serious lung or heart disease or who were born premature may be eligible for preventative RSV treatment

PROTECT YOURSELF, YOUR FAMILY & COMMUNITY
- Watch for signs of illness and stay home if you are sick
- Wear a well-fitted medical mask or KN95 in crowded indoor settings
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub
- Keep high touch surfaces clean (door handles, light switches, phones, etc.)
- Avoid visiting to those who are sick
- Make sure you and your family are up to date with immunizations

Immunization
- Immunization is your best protection against respiratory illnesses
- All Ontarians, over 6 months of age should get their flu shot and COVID-19 booster
- RSV vaccine may available to those living in long-term care, elder care lodges, and retirement homes later in the respiratory illness season

COMPARING COVID-19, FLU & RSV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMPTOMS</th>
<th>COVID-19</th>
<th>INFLUENZA</th>
<th>RSV</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fever or Chills</td>
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<td>Cough</td>
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<td>Trouble Breathing</td>
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<td>Runny or Stuffy Nose</td>
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<td>Feeling Tired or Weak</td>
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<td>Sore Throat</td>
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<td>Nausea, Vomiting or Diarrhea</td>
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<td>Loss of Taste or Smell</td>
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FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER