



NORTHUMBERLAND HILLS HOSPITAL

NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Seven tips for a healthy holiday season

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Tuesday, December 10, 2019—With the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit confirming the arrival of influenza in our region, and holiday festivities and schedules soon upon us, Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH) is sharing its annual reminder to take extra precautions and plan ahead, where possible, to help ensure local health care services are accessible for those who need them the most.

Below are seven steps we can all take in the next few weeks to help ensure a healthy start to winter. NHH extends best wishes to all for a safe, happy and healthy holiday season.

1) Wash your hands – often!

Reduce your risk of picking up the unwanted germs that live on surfaces by washing your hands often – especially when you are out in public. Regular, proper hand hygiene is the single most effective step you can take to stop the spread of seasonal viruses. Find a video with tips for proper hand hygiene on the [local Health Unit's website](#).

2) Get your flu shot, not the flu

Don't let the flu take the fun out of your holiday celebrations. Recommended for those six months of age and older, you can protect yourself, your family and your community by getting the free influenza vaccination. Available now from family physician offices, community health centres, walk-in clinics and pharmacies, the flu vaccination is your best line of defense against a potentially dangerous virus. For a full list of pharmacies offering flu vaccination clinics in the area, as well as answers to frequently asked questions about the vaccine, see the [local Health Unit's website](#).

3) Try to eat well, and get a good balance of rest and exercise

If our body is tired and not properly nourished, it's not at peak performance to fight off germs and harmful bacteria. We can help to keep our immune systems strong by powering up with a healthy diet, plenty of rest and regular exercise. Resources on healthy eating, including links to Canada's food guides, can be found on the [local Health Unit's website](#).

4) Direct your coughs and sneezes into a tissue or your sleeve

Minimize the risk of spreading germs to the surfaces you touch by sneezing and coughing into a tissue or your sleeve instead of into your hand.

5) Stay home from work, school and public events if you are sick

Sometimes, the fastest way for our health to improve is to rest. When you're sick, staying home to get some rest is beneficial to your own health, and is also a good way of minimizing the spread of germs to others. Influenza spreads from person to person through a handshake or a cough, and can be unknowingly transmitted to others, particularly those who may be more vulnerable, such as older adults, very young children and those whose immune systems have been compromised by another illness.

6) Pay attention to your doctor/nurse practitioner's holiday hours and plan ahead when possible

Local primary care offices will have special hours of operation over the holiday season. Now, in advance of these closures, is the time to check to see when your doctor or nurse practitioner will be available and to confirm your family's prescriptions are up-to-date so you can minimize non-urgent trips to the ED.

7) Consider Emergency Department alternatives

NHH's Emergency Department is always ready when you need it, but the team does recommend considering area primary care offices or community clinics for non-emergency health concerns. Many local family physicians now operate after-hour clinics, accessible to their patients only. Check to see if your family physician has an after-hour service in place. If your situation is non-urgent, and your family physician isn't available, you can also:

- Get free telephone access to a Registered Nurse 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through the **Telehealth Ontario** service at 1-866-797-0000 (TTY 1-866-797-0007).
- Visit the **Port Hope Walk-In Clinic** at 99 Toronto Road, Port Hope (2nd floor). The Clinic (905-885-0611) will be closed on Mondays as well as on December 25th, 26th, and January 1st. It will remain open every other day over the holidays, including December 24th, from 10AM to 4PM on weekends, and 11AM to 5PM on weekdays (at the discretion of the physician working each day).
- Find a detailed listing of health and community services across the region at <http://www.centraleasthealthline.ca/>.

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About Northumberland Hills Hospital – Located approximately 100 kilometres east of Toronto, NHH delivers a broad range of acute, post-acute, outpatient and diagnostic services. Acute services include emergency and intensive care, medical/surgical care, obstetrical care and palliative care. Post-acute specialty services (PASS) include restorative care and rehabilitation. Mental health care, chemotherapy, dialysis and 16 other ambulatory care clinics are offered on an outpatient basis through partnerships with regional centres and nearby specialists. NHH offers a full range of diagnostic services, including magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), computed tomography (CT) and mammography. The hospital serves the catchment area of west Northumberland County. A mixed urban and rural population of approximately 60,000 residents, west Northumberland comprises the Town of Cobourg, the Municipality of Port Hope and the townships of Hamilton, Cramahe and Alnwick/Haldimand. NHH employs approximately 600 people and relies on the additional support provided by physicians and volunteers. NHH is an active member of the Central East Local Health Integration Network. For more information, please visit www.nhh.ca or follow us on Twitter [@NorHillsHosp](https://twitter.com/NorHillsHosp).

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