



**Northwestern  
Health Unit**

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## **Influenza hits Northwestern Ontario early**

The Northwestern Health Unit (NWHU) reports that a first case of Influenza has been confirmed in the region. Having one positive case means that there are other, non-lab tested cases in the area.

Influenza cases this early in the season are rare, and the NWHU urges everyone to get a flu shot right away as the vaccine takes 2 weeks to work. “The flu vaccine is the best way to prevent the flu, it is important to get the shot as soon as possible,” says Dr. Kit Young-Hoon, Medical Officer of Health at NWHU.

Flu shots are free of charge for all Ontario residents. Many pharmacies can give the shot to anyone over 5 years old, with no appointment needed. Young-Hoon notes, “Pharmacies, health care providers and the NWHU offer flu shots, however, families with young children should see us or their health care provider to get their shot.”

To prevent influenza, get a flu shot, cough and sneeze into your sleeve, and wash your hands often. “If you do happen to get sick, remember to stay home from work or school and avoid public places until you’re feeling better,” Dr. Young-Hoon advises. You should not visit friends and family in hospitals or long-term care homes when you have a fever or are unwell with an illness that can spread to others (e.g. cold, flu, vomiting, diarrhea etc.). If you need medical care for a flu or cold virus, try calling Telehealth first at 1-866-797-0000.

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