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Northwestern Health Unit
www.nwhu.on.ca

For immediate release

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Stay healthy this holiday season by preventing the spread of respiratory illness

Northwestern Health Unit is reminding everyone to stay safe this holiday season and prevent unnecessary visits to the hospital by preventing the spread of respiratory infections.

"It's not too late to get your vaccines to protect your families and communities and enjoy a safe and happy holiday season" says Sandra Krikke, Acting Manager of Infectious Diseases at Northwestern Health Unit. "Flu and COVID-19 vaccinations are available from many pharmacies and health care providers and at NWHU clinics around the region."

The following measures will also help to keep you and others healthy:

- Wear a tight-fitting, well-constructed mask in indoor public settings, especially if you or someone you are with is at higher risk of severe infection and when in health-care settings/places with mask policies.
- Screen daily for signs of illness and staying home when you are sick
- Wash or sanitize your hands often
- Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze
- Regularly clean frequently touched surfaces.

If you do get symptoms, remember to stay home and isolate yourself from others, especially staying away from newborns, the elderly and anyone at high risk of severe illness, until ALL of the following apply:

- Your symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours (or 48 hours after any nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea has ended)
- You do not have a fever
- You do not develop any new symptoms

Also for 10 days after your symptoms started:

- Wear a tight-fitting mask in all public settings
- Avoid non-essential visits to anyone who is immunocompromised or at a higher risk of illness, for example, seniors

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- Avoid non-essential visits to high-risk settings such as hospitals and long-term care homes
- Avoid non-essential activities where you need to take your mask off, for example dining out.

For more information, on COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses, visit online: Protection from COVID 19 and other respiratory illnesses – ontario.ca

Get vaccinated by contacting your local pharmacy or health care provider, or by making an appointment by visiting the health unit's Booking a COVID-19 or Flu Vaccine Appointment page.

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