



Renfrew County and District Health Unit
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

For Immediate Release

(Pembroke, Ontario, December 12, 2025)

Stay Protected Over the Holiday Season as Flu Activity Rises

This year's flu season has started early across Ontario, and influenza activity is high in many parts of the province. The Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) is seeing a concerning rise in flu cases and hospitalizations among children. In Renfrew County and District (RCD), flu activity is rising, and current trends suggest we are likely to see our local peak over the next two to four weeks.

A new version of the H3N2 influenza A virus is the main flu strain circulating this year. International experience, along with early provincial and regional data, suggests this strain can lead to more infections and more pressure on hospitals than in a typical year. Even though this strain is somewhat different from the one in the flu vaccine, getting vaccinated still helps prevent severe illness and hospital stays.

Flu and COVID-19 vaccines are recommended for everyone 6 months of age and older. RSV immunization is available for eligible newborns, infants, and adults 75 and older.

Where to Get Vaccinated

To book an appointment for Flu, COVID-19, and/or RSV vaccination, please use RCDHU's [online booking system](#), or call 613-732-9436.

COVID-19 and flu vaccines are also available through participating pharmacies and healthcare providers, while RSV vaccines are available through participating healthcare providers.

"With flu activity rising quickly and a new H3N2 strain leading to higher levels of flu illness and hospitalizations, it is especially important to get your flu vaccine as soon as possible," says Dr. Jason Morgenstern, Medical Officer of Health at RCDHU. "The flu vaccine takes about two weeks to provide full protection, so now is the time to act before holiday gatherings."

Other tips to decrease your chances of getting sick and spreading illness

In addition to vaccination, RCDHU encourages residents to:

- Stay home when sick and keep sick children home from school or daycare.
- Wear a mask in crowded indoor settings, especially if you or someone close to you is at higher risk of severe illness.

- Wash hands often, cover coughs and sneezes, and clean frequently touched surfaces.

Treatment Options

Antiviral medications for flu and COVID-19 are available for people who are at higher risk of severe illness. Talk with your healthcare provider now about whether you are eligible, so treatment can be started as early as possible if you become sick.

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