



## H1N1 Be Prepared Hand-out for Parents

### Processes to prevent the spread of Influenza A H1N1 or Influenza-Like Infection (ILI)

September 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians

We are writing to let you know that Scouts Canada is committed to the safety of all of its members, volunteers, and leaders. This commitment includes limiting the spread of the H1N1 virus as much as possible.

It is our intention to continue with all of our regular programs to the best of our ability, while ensuring the wellbeing of our youth members, parents and leaders. To that end, we ask for your cooperation in implementing the following processes:

- **WATCH** for symptoms and be prepared to retrieve your child
- **LISTEN** for closures and community updates
- **NOTIFY** leaders if symptoms occur
- **PRACTICE** safe hygiene for prevention
- **SUPPORT** your child's recovery

#### **Watch for symptoms and be prepared to: keep your child at home/pick up your child**

Should your child exhibit any of the Influenza-like Infection (ILI) symptoms outlined below, we ask that you keep your child at home, and contact your family doctor. Please also be advised that in keeping with our Duty of Care, we will notify the parents/guardians of any child in our program that exhibits these symptoms during our meetings and activities. We will contact the child's parents/guardians immediately and keep the child comfortable and separated from others until his or her parent or guardian is able to pick him or her up.

#### **ILI symptoms include:**

Sudden onset of respiratory illness (e.g., shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, coughing up bloody sputum, wheezing),

**AND**

Fever greater than 38 degrees Celsius,

**AND**

Any of the following:

- Sore throat
- Aching joints
- Muscle aches or weakness
- Extreme drowsiness
- Feeling disoriented and confused
- Extreme pain in the ear

## **Listen for closures in the community**

Should schools and other public gathering places in your municipality be closed by a local health authority as a result of the virus, in keeping with our Duty of Care to our members, we will take the following measures:

- 1) All camping and other outdoor Scouting activities will be postponed
- 2) All regular weekly meetings will be cancelled until normal activities resume

Should Scouts Canada have to temporarily suspend activities, you will be contacted directly by phone or e-mail by a member of Scouts Canada. In addition, notices will be posted on your local Council website. Scouts Canada will make every attempt to contact you concerning the resumption of meetings.

## **Notify us if your child shows symptoms**

A person may appear to be perfectly healthy and yet may carry and inadvertently spread the H1N1 virus. Should your child exhibit the symptoms described above following a meeting, please notify your leader of the situation as quickly as possible so that others may be contacted.

Should we learn that a youth or leader exhibits ILI symptoms within 24 hours of a meeting or activity, we will endeavor to notify all individuals present at the activity, who likely had contact with the individual exhibiting symptoms.

## **Encourage your child to practice safe hygiene**

Encourage your child to use respiratory hygiene (i.e., covering their mouth and nose with a tissue or their sleeve when coughing and/or sneezing, followed by hand washing), wash their hands often using soap and water, and keep their hands away from their eyes, nose and mouth. These important measures can help protect your child and to stop the spread of the virus.

Symptoms of influenza A H1N1 include the sudden onset of fever and cough, with headache, muscles aches, lethargy or lack of appetite. Some people have also reported runny nose, sore throat and diarrhea.

Health authorities recommend that children with the symptoms outlined above stay at home for at least 7 days from the onset of symptoms. If their symptoms last longer than 7 days, then they should stay home until 24 hours after the symptoms are gone.

## **Help your child recover more quickly**

If your child becomes ill, to help support your child's recovery, the ministries of health in most provinces recommend the following:

- Ensure your child rests and drinks plenty of fluids.
- Treat the symptoms of illness such as fever and muscle aches as you normally would.
- Aspirin (ASA) or aspirin-containing products should not be given to children under 18 years of age with influenza-like illness due to the risk of Reye's syndrome.
- If you need to take your child to a doctor to have him/her examined, please inform your doctor that your child may have been exposed to influenza A H1N1 at a camp.

**For more information call the H1N1 Flu hotline at 1-800-454-8302 or visit [www.fightflu.ca](http://www.fightflu.ca)**

Thank you for your attention.