



September, 2009

To All Parents/Guardians:

As we begin another school year, we would like to share important information with you regarding your family's health and this year's influenza season.

This fall and winter, there will be two types of flu viruses circulating in our communities – the seasonal flu viruses and the new H1N1 flu virus.

Flu-like illnesses spread very easily. Everyone is encouraged to follow the usual infection control precautions to stay healthy and reduce the risk of illness. Precautions include: washing your hands well and often, coughing and sneezing into your sleeve, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, staying home when you are ill and cleaning and disinfecting shared surfaces. You can help reduce the impact of illness in our community by teaching and encouraging your children to do the same.

Prior to sending your children to school, you are encouraged to check them for symptoms of influenza-like illness. Symptoms of influenza-like illness are a sudden fever (over 100 degrees Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius) and cough and one or more of the following: sore throat, muscle aches, joint pain or weakness. In children under five years of age, vomiting or diarrhea may also be present and fever may not be prominent.

If your child is ill or exhibiting flu-like symptoms, please **keep your child at home** until they no longer have a fever and are feeling better.

York Region Community and Health Services has been monitoring the local H1N1 situation and is working closely with other levels of government and various stakeholders. Further information will be provided to you by York Region Community and Health Services when it becomes available at [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca).

Schools are advised to operate as per their daily routines. Any decision to close or modify school operations due to illness will be made in consultation with York Region Community and Health Services.

In preparation for the upcoming flu season, you are also encouraged to review your own plans for what to do when your child is sick.

If you have any concerns about your child's health, please contact your family physician or call Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 (24 hours day/7 days a week).

Additional information and resources are posted on [www.york.ca](http://www.york.ca). Check this website often for updates as the flu season unfolds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karim Kurji".

Dr. Karim Kurji  
Medical Officer of Health  
The Regional Municipality of York