

**Public Health**  
277 Victoria Street  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, Ontario M5B 1W2**Tel:** 416-338-7820  
**Fax:** 416-392-0713  
dmckeown@toronto.ca  
www.toronto.ca/health

April 29, 2009

### Information for Parents About Swine Flu

Toronto Public Health is working closely with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to monitor the progression of the outbreak of swine influenza and specifically to investigate reports of possible cases in Toronto. The World Health Organization has raised the alert level for pandemic influenza preparedness and is calling on all countries and populations to participate in preventing the transmission of swine flu.

#### What is swine flu?

- Swine flu is a variant of seasonal influenza and contains parts of flu viruses from birds, pigs and humans.
- Symptoms of swine flu are the same as seasonal influenza and include fever, headache, cough, muscle aches, sore throat, chills, and weakness or fatigue, and may include vomiting and diarrhea.
- Influenza is transmitted from person to person via coughs and sneezes that release germs into the air where they can be breathed in by others. Germs can also be transferred by hands and on hard surfaces like counters and doorknobs.

Toronto Public Health will provide updates on the outbreak on a timely basis. Personal protective measures such as masks are currently not recommended for use by the general public and will be employed by healthcare providers who are treating patients according to the guidelines set out by the MOHLTC. For more information, visit [www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca)

#### What can you do to stop the spread of germs?

- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and hot water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze
- If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve or arm
- Stay home if you are ill
- If you have recently travelled to Mexico **and** are exhibiting flu symptoms, contact your health care provider and make sure you mention your recent travel.

To get more information and local updates, please visit [www.toronto.ca/health](http://www.toronto.ca/health).  
For information about travel, call 1-800-454-8302 or visit [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca)

For health-related questions, call TeleHealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000

For general information on the swine flu, call the ServiceOntario INFOline 1-800-476-9708.

**Dr. David McKeown**  
**Medical Officer of Health**  
**Toronto Public Health**

