

Soccer and “Swine Flu” -- Some Practical Advice

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VAUGHAN, ON -- As you are undoubtedly aware H1N1 (“Swine Flu”) has appeared in Canada. While to date most cases of this virus resemble seasonal flu, there have been some severe cases and deaths in Canada.

Young people can be among those hardest hit by this virus.

Given that those involved in soccer competitions often live in close contact with teammates and other competitors it makes sense for all of us involved in sport to be aware of how we might minimize the risk of transmission of the flu...and understand how to deal with those who might develop flu-like symptoms in the course of participating in events or tournaments.

The advice provided to the general public to avoid the H1N1 virus, and other illnesses, also applies to athletes and those involved with sports in their communities. It is important for everyone, both at home, at work and at play, to follow these simple hygiene tips to help avoid becoming ill or spreading viruses:

- Wash your hands thoroughly and often with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available - Wash your hands every time you pass a sink!
- Bring alcohol-based hand sanitizer with you to competitions and training where soap and water may not be readily available;
- Don’t share water bottles or other drinking/eating utensils with other athletes; Educate players and coaches to bring their own water bottles, suitably identified with name and player number.
- Cough into your arm or sleeve. Tissues can be used to cover coughs and sneezes, but be sure to wash your hands after throwing out the tissue;
- Clean shared-use equipment and common touch surfaces (e.g. handrails, door knobs, computer keyboards) regularly with household cleaner or disinfectant wipes.
- In residences or hotels ensure that players and coaches avoid mixing towels & face cloths - and try to keep rooms as clean and tidy as possible!
- If a player or official begins to develop symptoms of a flu-like illness (fever, cough, muscle pain, headache) move them to a room of their own if possible. Those with such symptoms should stay away from practices, games or tournaments until they are feeling well and able to resume normal activities. Anyone with flu-like symptoms should not be participating in, or attending practices, games or other events.

Players can safely participate in the FIFA Fair Play shake hands at the start/end of a game. All normal practices are safe, as long as proper hygiene procedures are followed.

In general, successful preventive practices consist of “... doing ordinary things extraordinarily well ...”.

Contact local public health officials if questions or concerns arise or visit Health Canada website www.hc-sc.gc.ca/index-eng.php for the latest information.

Know the Difference between Cold and H1N1 Flu Symptoms

Symptom	Cold	H1N1 Flu
Fever	Fever is rare with a cold.	Fever is usually present with the flu in up to 80% of all flu cases. A temperature of 100°F or higher for 3 to 4 days is associated with the flu.
Coughing	A hacking, productive (mucus-producing) cough is often present with a cold.	A non-productive (non-mucus producing) cough is usually present with the flu (sometimes referred to as dry cough).
Aches	Slight body aches and pains can be part of a cold.	Severe aches and pains are common with the flu.
Stuffy Nose	Stuffy nose is commonly present with a cold and typically resolves spontaneously within a week.	Stuffy nose is not commonly present with the flu.
Chills	Chills are uncommon with a cold.	60% of people who have the flu experience chills.
Tiredness	Tiredness is fairly mild with a cold.	Tiredness is moderate to severe with the flu.
Sneezing	Sneezing is commonly present with a cold.	Sneezing is not common with the flu.
Sudden Symptoms	Cold symptoms tend to develop over a few days.	The flu has a rapid onset within 3-6 hours. The flu hits hard and includes sudden symptoms like high fever, aches and pains.
Headache	A headache is fairly uncommon with a cold.	A headache is very common with the flu, present in 80% of flu cases.
Sore Throat	Sore throat is commonly present with a cold.	Sore throat is not commonly present with the flu.
Chest Discomfort	Chest discomfort is mild to moderate with a cold.	Chest discomfort is often severe with the flu.

The H1N1 flu is a respiratory illness caused by a type A influenza virus

Typical symptoms are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and can include:

- Fever
 - Weakness/Fever
 - Lack of Appetite
 - Coughing
 - Sore Throat
 - Headache
 - Muscle and Joint Pain
 - Congestion
 - Runny Nose
- In some cases, these symptoms are accompanied by:
- nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea

If you are sick with the flu or attending to a family member with flu who is dependent upon you for health care, do not come to the Soccer Centre.

In some cases, severe illness (pneumonia and respiratory failure) and deaths have been reported in people with H1N1 flu.

Like seasonal flu, the H1N1 flu may cause a worsening of underlying chronic medical conditions.

Spread of the H1N1 flu virus is thought to be happening in the same way that seasonal flu spreads.

Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing. Sometimes people become infected by touching contaminated objects or surfaces and then touching their mouths or noses.

Infected people may be able to infect others beginning one day before symptoms develop and until symptoms have resolved.

That means that people can pass on the flu to others before they realize they are sick.

Children, especially younger children, might potentially be contagious for longer periods.

The Epidemiologic Triad

HOST Factors
ENVIRONMENT Factors
AGENT Factors

**NB. Hand Shaking???NO??? Recommendations
Frequent Hand Washing is recommended!**