

September 2023

Dear Resident or Alternate Decision Maker,

Fall is the time to prepare for respiratory outbreak season. An outbreak is an increase in the number of people who live at a facility and become sick with the same kind of infection. Individuals living in lodges and supportive living facilities may be exposed to different kinds of respiratory infections including influenza and COVID-19. Those who are age 65 or older and anyone with chronic medical conditions are most at risk of serious illness and hospitalization.

Outbreaks may occur at the facility you live in. The table below shows some ways to keep yourself from becoming sick, and to protect yourself if there is an outbreak.

How to protect yourself from infections
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water or use an alcohol based hand rub.• Practice physical distancing (2 meters/6 feet) when in public places.• Stay in your room when you are sick. Tell someone in your facility when you are feeling sick.• Consider wearing a mask in public places.• Cough or sneeze into your sleeve or a tissue - not your hands.• Consider getting immunized to protect yourself against vaccine preventable illness [e.g., Pneumococcal).
How to protect yourself from influenza
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get your annual influenza vaccine every fall.• A prescriber (physician, nurse practitioner, or prescribing pharmacist) can give you a prescription for a medicine called Oseltamivir (Tamiflu®) that can help to keep you from getting ill if there is an influenza outbreak at your site. See a prescriber as soon as possible to get a prescription in advance. Bring the attached form called <i>Advance Prescription for Oseltamivir (Tamiflu®)</i> with you.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ This medication is filled and taken during an outbreak even if you have been immunized against influenza as an extra level of protection.○ There is no charge for this medication.
How to protect yourself from COVID-19
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get all recommended doses of COVID-19 vaccine.• For the most updated information please visit: https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16944.aspx

If you have further questions, please contact the manager at your site.

Thank you for your attention to this important health matter.

Medical Officer of Health, North Zone