



# Press Release

For Immediate Release:  
July 17, 2009  
Six Nations Council



## Prevention is the key to reduce risk of H1N1 infection

---

OHSWEKEN (17/07/09) – Six Nations Elected Council (SNEC) Chief William Montour is calling upon community members to stay calm and learn how to reduce the risk of getting H1N1.

News of a confirmed mild H1N1 case has created uncertainty in the community that Six Nations Elected Council, Ohsweken Public Health and SN Health Services are addressing.

“Acts of aggression against unfortunate community members, who have contracted this influenza at no fault of their own, cannot be tolerated,” stated Chief Montour. “This is a communicable disease that can affect anyone who may come in contact with persons suffering from this flu.”

Chief Montour also pointed out, “There is no possible way for anyone to be able to assess who may be carrying this disease in gatherings of people. Common sense must prevail and precautions can be taken.”

Six Nations Health Services Director Ruby Miller offered reassurance through information and actions taken. “We’re going to work together to eliminate what we can. We need to work together to support each other,” she said.

The best line of defence is thorough and frequent hand washing or by using an alcohol-based hand rub with a 60 to 90 per cent alcohol content. Cover your cough in the fabric of your sleeve or with a tissue (not your hands) and throw the tissue in the garbage. Stay home when you are sick and keep children home when they are sick. Avoid close contact with those who are sick. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth to prevent viral infection.

Practicing good health habits keeps the immune system strong. Get plenty of sleep and exercise and eat nutritious food and drink plenty of water. Consider stopping smoking because it weakens the immune system.

H1N1 symptoms include fever and/or chills, a new or worse cough, sore throat, body aches, headaches, loss of appetite and fatigue. Contact your doctor to report symptoms. Most people recover at home but if symptoms worsen, see your doctor. Anti-viral medication may be prescribed by physicians to patients with a great risk for complications.

Recovery times are different for everyone. People with flu symptoms should stay home for up to seven days or 48 hours after symptoms are gone.

People who have no symptoms but have been in contact with a person with flu symptoms should limit community activities and watch for symptoms and report them to a doctor if they occur. Pregnant women should avoid providing care to others.

Ohsweken Public Health and SN Health Services are preparing for mass vaccinations when the vaccine is available to the community possibly in late fall.

While a person can transmit the virus 24 hours before symptoms appear, the risk is very low due to the low level of virus in the early stages of illness. A person can transmit the virus up to seven days after symptoms appear. Tests, when ordered by a doctor, take five to seven days to come back. Doctors follow Ontario Ministry of Health protocols and do not routinely orders tests for people in contact with a sick person.

Further information including how to care for a sick family member is in the H1N1 booklet created by Health Services. On July 24, the booklet will be delivered by mail to community homes accepting flyers. The booklet is posted on the Six Nations Elected Council's website, [www.sixnations.ca](http://www.sixnations.ca). On July 24 it can be picked up at the SN administration building.

“Ohsweken Public Health and Six Nations Health Services are working diligently to prepare our response to the coming flu season as well as continuing business as usual,” said Director Miller. “We are happy to take calls and to give the correct information.”

Health Services and Public Health recently met with the Grand River Pow Wow committee to outline prevention action. H1N1 booklets will be available at the Health Services booth and hand washing will be promoted throughout Chiefswood Park.

Ohsweken Public Health and SN Health Services spoke to parents at the Stoneridge Day Care on July 16. Health Director Miller told them that Six Nations has done a tremendous job in developing Six Nations Emergency Response Plan that includes an influenza plan.

“Planning has been going on and this community is much more prepared than most communities,” noted Director Miller.

Chief Montour said lessons were learned from SARS. “We’ve been expecting this,” he added. “This is a community thing and we have to fight this together for everyone.”

-30-

---

***Spokespeople:***

Health Services Director Ruby Miller  
519-445-2418  
Six Nations Elected Chief William Montour  
519-445-2205 Ext. 230

Karen Best, Communications Officer  
1695 Chiefswood Rd  
Ohsweken ON, N0A 1M0  
phone: 519 445- 2201 ext. 240  
fax: 519 445-4208