

PROTECT DON'T INFECT: COLD AND FLU SEASON AT CHEO DURING COVID-19



Protect, don't infect!

Every year during the winter months, many people catch the seasonal flu virus, common cold or get sick from other infections. At CHEO, we call this "peak season" because it is the busiest time of the year. This year, peak season measures are even more important because of COVID-19.

During this time we rely on you to help protect against the spread of infection—when young children and babies are exposed to infections like the flu or COVID-19, there can be serious consequences. We all have a role to play.

Staying at CHEO

This is our busiest time of the year. If your child or youth is admitted to CHEO, we'll need a bit of extra help and patience from you.

Stay home if you're sick or have been exposed to COVID-19

If you are sick, you should stay home and get well. If you have had close contact with someone who has COVID-19 the safest thing for your child and all others at CHEO is that you stay home. You can ask a family member or close family friend to stay with your child at CHEO during this time. Rest assured that we will find extra support for your child if you are unable to be with them.

During the pandemic, we should all be self-monitoring for any new symptoms that could be COVID-19. If you or your child develop new symptoms while your child is at CHEO it is really important that you let your health-care team know. Also, if you become aware that you or your child have had a close contact to COVID-19 while you are at CHEO please let us know.

Follow our parent/caregiver presence policies

During our cold and flu season, and especially during COVID-19, CHEO has special rules in place to prevent infections from spreading. Any exceptions must be discussed with the health-care team or unit manager and worked out ahead of time.

- To limit the number of people in the building, ONE parent/caregiver will be allowed to accompany children and youth while at CHEO, whether in clinic, the Surgical Day Unit or the Emergency Department.
- Visit cheo.on.ca/covid-19 to stay up to date on our latest parent and caregiver presence policy. The number of caregivers allowed by the bedside is subject to change during the pandemic and there may be times when we must limit the caregivers at the bedside to one. Only those who have been screened daily will be permitted at the bedside.
- Visitors are not allowed at CHEO during this time. Only siblings who are identified as designated caregivers are permitted. We appreciate that this requires you to make childcare arrangements for any siblings, and we are so thankful for your support in doing so.

Wash your hands often

Clean your hands with hand sanitizer or soap and water for 15 seconds:

- every time, you enter your child's room and upon exiting
- after sneezing, coughing, or any contact with mucus from the nose or mouth
- before and after eating
- every time you come back to the unit from common areas of CHEO (for example, the kitchenette on the unit, the Medical Imaging department if your child needed to go for an Xray)
- after using the bathroom, assisting your child in the bathroom or changing a diaper
- before accessing the unit kitchenette

Be patient about moves

Because this is the busiest time of the year, we have to move patients to different rooms more often than we would like. We know this can be difficult and we greatly appreciate patience and understanding.

Keep your child's bed space and common areas clean

- Limit the number of personal items you bring with you (it's harder to clean when rooms are cluttered).
- Please ask your health-care team if you wish to use the unit kitchenette or parent showers.
- Never return food or drinks to the unit kitchenette after they have been in your child's room; please don't wash dishes in the sink in your child's room (it is for hand washing only) – dirty dishes should be taken home and washed.
- Use the surface cleaning wipes available in the room as needed.

Is your child or youth in isolation? Please review the isolation handout you were given – ask your nurse for a copy if you need one or search for it on cheo.on.ca.

Coming for clinic appointments

If you have a clinic appointment, we need your help too to prevent the spread of infection. Only one parent or caregiver may accompany your child to their clinic appointment. Siblings should not be coming for clinic appointments.



1. Get your flu shot before your visit

- children older than six months can get the flu shot
- the earlier you get the shot the better, but it's never too late in the season to get you and your family vaccinated
- the flu shot helps protect those who can't be vaccinated, like small babies or sick children

2. Before your visit, complete your online self-screening

- The screening tool is available at cheo.on.ca/selfscreen and is easy to fill out on the day of your appointment. Families who have completed their online screening in advance have access to our 'Fast Lane' and will spend less time in the screening area.

3. Wash your hands regularly

- use soap and water and hand sanitizer whenever you can
- wash your hands before you eat
- avoid touching your baby or young child without first washing your hands
- wash your hands after touching commonly touched surfaces like doorknobs, handrails, elevator buttons, etc.



4. Stay home if you are sick or have been exposed to COVID-19

Staying home protects others, especially young children and babies for whom the flu and other infections can be deadly. If you or your child are sick:

- Call 613-737-2222 as soon as possible to reschedule your child's appointment.
- Stay home until you have been fever free without the use of anti-fever medication for 24 hours and are feeling better and until the end of a period of self-isolation as directed by Ottawa Public Health.
- Choose wisely on whether or not to come to the Emergency Department – if you're unsure, visit cheo.on.ca for resources on when to come to the ED or book a virtual ED visit.

Need information? Visit cheo.on.ca

Use our handy search tool to find CHEO-approved health resources, clinic information and much, much more!

 