



November 30, 2022

Dear Niagara community members,

Our community has been through a lot in the past few years. It is now facing a triple threat of the flu (influenza), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and COVID-19, which is making many residents sick – especially children. The current situation is putting a strain on our health care system in Niagara and across Ontario.

Everyone can be assured that, most of the time, these illnesses can be safely managed at home, and symptoms can be treated with over-the-counter medications, for example, acetaminophen or ibuprofen. As a first option, people having trouble accessing over-the-counter medicine should call their primary care provider if they have one or speak to a pharmacist for advice.

Parents and guardians know their children best and should reach out to a primary care provider or visit a walk-in clinic if they have concerns. Local health care providers currently have higher numbers of patient calls and visits than usual. For non-urgent visits, wait times may be longer.

While emergency departments are currently facing capacity issues, in some cases, it is the only place to get the appropriate care. If you or your child are experiencing any of the following, go to the closest [emergency department](#) or call 9-1-1:

- You or your child are seriously ill
- You have a baby who is younger than three months old who has a fever
- You or your child is struggling to breathe or is at risk of dehydration

You can learn about your health care options through Niagara Health's [Know Your Options resource](#) or seek out urgent online medical care services through [UrgentCareOntario.ca](#). More information on symptoms and advice for next steps can be found through Health Connect Ontario's [assessment tool](#).

We know the pandemic has impacted everyone, and we're grateful for everything people have done to protect those around them. However, now is not the time to stop. Niagara is filled with amazing people who have shown great care, compassion, and resilience. We need your help to keep our community as safe and healthy as possible as we navigate these ongoing challenges.

Please, if possible, [get up to date with your vaccinations](#), [wear a mask](#) and [stay home when you're sick](#). Together, we can get through this.

Thank you,

Niagara Ontario Health Team-Équipe Santé Ontario Niagara*

*See Appendix for a list of NOHT-ÉSON members, partners, and collaborators.

Appendix

List of NOHT-ÉSON Members, Partners, and Collaborators

Garden City Family Health Team
Niagara Medical Group Family Health Team
Niagara North Family Health Team
Portage Medical Family Health Team
Welland McMaster Family Health Team

Bridges Community Health Centre
Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton-
Niagara
Dr. Darija Vujosevic, Primary Care Clinical Lead
De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre
Niagara Falls Community Health Centre
Quest Community Health Centre

Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation
Centre
Niagara Health

Regional Municipality of Niagara
Regional Municipality of Niagara - Emergency
Medical Services
Regional Municipality of Niagara - Mental Health
Services
Regional Municipality of Niagara - Public Health
Regional Municipality of Niagara - Seniors
Services (Long Term Care and Community
Programs)

Alzheimer Society of Niagara Region
ARID Recovery Homes
Brock University - Faculty of Health Sciences
Brain Injury Community Re-entry - Niagara
Canadian Mental Health Association - Niagara
Community Addiction Services of Niagara
Community Support Services of Niagara Region
Consumer Survivor Initiative of Niagara
Contact Niagara for Children's and
Developmental Services
Diane Martin - Patient/Client/Family/Caregiver
Representative
Entité² French Language Health Planning
Fort Erie Meals on Wheels
Foyer Richelieu
Gateway Residential and Community Support
Services
Heidehof Long Term Care Home

Home and Community Care Support Services -
Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant
Hospice Niagara
Ina Grafton Gage Long Term Care Home
Indigenous Health Network
Jori Warren - Patient/Client/Family/Caregiver
Representative
March of Dimes Canada - Niagara
McMaster University - Niagara Regional
Campus, Michael G. DeGroote School of
Medicine
Meals on Wheels Niagara Falls
Meals on Wheels Port Colborne
Niagara College - Faculty of Community and
Health Studies
Oak Centre Alternative Community Support
Olga McNeil - Patient/Client/Family/Caregiver
Representative
Positive Living Niagara
Radiant Care - Pleasant Manor / Tabor Manor
Sarah Cannon - Patient/Client/Family/Caregiver
Representative
United Mennonite Home
Wayside House of St. Catharines