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Intercare Corporate Group Inc.

"The Heart of Excellence"

Infection Prevention & Control

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Respiratory Viruses

Respiratory illness is caused by viruses or bacteria that affect the airway and lungs. Respiratory illness can be spread by coughing, sneezing or face-to-face contact.

Symptoms of a respiratory illness include cough, runny or stuffy nose and sore throat, which may be caused by one of the following: COVID-19, influenza (flu), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), rhinovirus and other viruses that cause the common cold

You can protect yourself from some respiratory illnesses by keeping up to date with your vaccinations and by learning more about the importance of getting immunized against respiratory illness.

	COVID-19	Influenza	Common Cold	GI Illness
Virus	SARS-CoV-2	Influenza virus A or B	Many viruses	Norovirus (most common)
Immunization	COVID-19 vaccine	Influenza vaccine	No vaccine	No vaccine
Onset	Gradual	Sudden	Gradual	Sudden

Alberta Health Services (AHS) has reported that 2024-25 was the deadliest Influenza season in sixteen (16) years, with the lowest vaccination rates seen since the 2010-11 influenza season.

Symptoms Chart

Symptoms	COVID-19	Influenza	Common Cold	GI Illness
Fever	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chills	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fatigue	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cough	✓	✓	✓	
Sneezing	✓	✓	✓	
Aches and pains	✓	✓	✓	✓
Runny and stuffy nose	✓	✓	✓	
Sore throat	✓		✓	
Diarrhea	✓	Children only		✓
Nausea/vomiting	✓	Children only		✓
Headache	✓	✓	✓	✓
Shortness of breathe	✓	✓		
Loss of smell or taste	✓			

Illnesses	Influenza	RSV	Covid-19
Cases in <u>Calgary, AB</u>	5418	2337	3560
Hospitalizations	1327	125	1074
ICU Admissions	88	76	56
Deaths	61	36	118

Influenza Vaccination

Influenza vaccination is crucially important for seniors due to their increased risk of severe complications and mortality from the flu. Vaccination helps reduce the likelihood of hospitalization, severe illness and death associated with influenza in this age group.

Increased Mortality:

Influenza-related deaths are significantly higher in the 65+ age group, with seniors accounting for a large percentage of flu-related deaths annually.

Weakened Immunity:

Age-related changes in the immune system make seniors more vulnerable to infections like influenza.

Protection of Vulnerable Individuals:

Vaccination not only protects seniors themselves, but also helps reduce the spread of the virus to others, including young children, infants and those with weakened immune systems.

Effectiveness of Specific Vaccines:

High-dose and adjuvanted flu vaccines are specifically recommended for seniors, as they have been shown to be more effective in this age group than standard-dose vaccines.

Reduced Hospitalizations:

Studies have shown that flu vaccination can significantly reduce the risk of hospitalization due to influenza and pneumonia in older adults.

In summary, influenza vaccinations are a vital preventive measure for seniors, offering them protection against severe illness, complications and death associated with influenza.



Resident Influenza Vaccination Rates

Alberta Health Services (AHS) reports the following Influenza Vaccination data:

Influenza Season	% of the Alberta population vaccinated	% of Intercare residents vaccinated
2024-25	21%	92%
2023-24	24%	85%
2022-23	28%	81%
2021-22	27%	81%
2020-21	37%	90%
2019-20	33%	92%
2018-19	31%	95%
2017-18	29%	95%

