

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Protect Yourself During Flu Season

November 8, 2021 (Winnipeg, M.B.) – With the upcoming 2021 – 2022 respiratory virus season upon us, Infection Prevention and Control Canada (IPAC Canada) is providing the following advice on how to protect yourself during flu season and alleviate expected confusion will about the nature of respiratory symptoms with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The past 18 months have been remarkably free of viruses other than COVID-19 as there has been strong attention to social distancing, aggressive attention to hand hygiene, and the use of respiratory protection (masks). We have already observed the presence of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and rhinovirus in our communities. With children at school and liberalization of social interactions based upon vaccination status, there will be more respiratory virus transmission within the community than we have observed in the past. Unfortunately, it will be exceedingly difficult to differentiate between infection caused by influenza and respiratory viruses, and COVID-19. The following tips will be of benefit as we head into the respiratory virus season:

- Continue following public health direction to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 which should also help to minimize the risk of transmission of other respiratory viruses.
- Should respiratory symptoms such as runny nose, fever, chills or cough occur, obtain a screening test for COVID-19.
- Check with your local Public Health Department for guidance about when and how to return to work and school following a respiratory illness.

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Infection Prevention and Control Canada (IPAC Canada) is the national, professional organization for those interested in the prevention and control of infections in all healthcare settings.

For further information and media inquiries, please contact:

Gerry Hansen, Executive Director
Infection Prevention and Control Canada
executivedirector@ipac-canada.org / 1-866-999-7111