

# Flu shot still a good idea, says Region health official

Continued from pg. 1

"We've been spoiled for the two years after the 2009 pandemic," said Halton Region's Associate Medical Officer of Health Dr. Monir Taha. "We're back to some more reality this year."

Taha said this has been the earliest onset of influenza in the last five years- with flu season getting underway in November and December.

"Normally things don't get going until January and February," Taha said, adding the season is the worst compared to the last five years with the exception of the 2009 H1N1 pandemic year. And Taha said this year's most common circulating strain—Influenza A (H3N2)—is "a little nastier" and can cause a more serious illness than some other types.

It's the kind that magnifies symptoms, leaving you weak and extremely tired with a high fever, body aches and a cough a few days later.

Taha said there have been significantly more influenza outbreaks in Halton nursing homes, long-term care facilities and retirement homes this year than the last couple of years.

But he said the good news is the facilities are handling the outbreaks well-identifying respiratory illnesses and letting the Region know quickly and putting all residents on Tamiflu to prevent them from getting the flu. He added there is a



99 per cent flu vaccine coverage rate in those facilities as well.

Taha said the flu vaccine is the best way to protect yourself from getting the illness.

But in Halton only one in five people get the flu shot, which "isn't a great number" he said.

"I would like to see those numbers much higher," Taha said, adding it's not too late to get the shot. He said flu season will continue well into the spring.

"It's worthwhile to do it," he said.

Residents are encouraged to visit their family physician to get vaccinated, visit pharmacies administering the shot or

drop by the Region's clinics held at its office off of Bronte Road in Oakville on January 9 and 17 from 4 to 8 p.m.

Taha adds it's important that those residents who are experiencing flu-like symptoms take the time off work to get better to prevent others from catching the virus.

He said it can last on surfaces from 5 to 15 minutes.

"The rule of thumb is don't touch your face before washing your hands or using alcohol (based) sanitizer," said Taha, adding he knows it can be difficult to remember.

For more information, visit [www.halton.ca](http://www.halton.ca).

—With files from Lisa Tallyn, staff writer

**GEORGETOWN**  
 **TOYOTA**

**GAME OF THE WEEK**

**GEORGETOWN JR. A**  
**RAIDERS**

vs

**NORTH YORK**

**Saturday, January 12, 2013**

**7:30 pm**

**Mold-Masters SportsPlex (Alcott Arena)**

**GEORGETOWN JUNIOR "A"**

**GO**  
**RAIDERS**  
**GO!**



[www.georgetownraidersjra.com](http://www.georgetownraidersjra.com)

**YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL IN EVERY SINGLE WAY!**



**What is your  
hair inspiration?**

Whether you are suffering from alopecia, undergoing chemotherapy treatments, or are looking for a fabulous new look, we carry a selection of fine wigs.

**Please come in or call us to  
book your personal appointment.  
Private home visits are available.**

**Call 905-877-2711 press 3**

A division of Young's Pharmacy & Homecare  
Located at 47 Main Street South,  
Georgetown, ON L7G 3G2

[www.youngspharmacy.com](http://www.youngspharmacy.com)

*Renaissance  
Woman* 

at Young's