

HEALTH CARE

It's back....

Flu season brings sniffles and sneezes

Influenza is a serious disease caused by a virus that affects the breathing passages. Colds, vomiting and diarrhea (often referred to as "the stomach flu") and other viral infections are often confused with influenza, but are caused by different viruses.

Influenza is much worse than a cold. Symptoms include a quick onset of fever, muscle aches, tiredness, headache, a non-productive cough, sore throat, and runny nose. The tiredness is usually severe enough to put one into bed for a few days. Symptoms typically last from five to ten days, but the cough and fatigue can linger for weeks. The risk of complications such as pneumonia, hospitalizations or deaths from influenza are higher for those 65 years and older, those under age two, and those of any age with medical conditions such as heart, lung, or kidney disease, diabetes, anemia, or cancer.

The virus spreads when a person who has influenza coughs or sneezes into the air. Small droplets containing the virus stay in the air for a short time and then fall on surfaces nearby. You can get infected by breathing in these droplets, having the droplets land directly in your eyes, or by touching surfaces contaminated with the virus and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth. The virus spreads easily in schools, residences and the workplace where there are large numbers of people in close contact in relatively small spaces. You can help prevent the spread of the virus by covering your cough and washing hands or using alcohol-based hand sanitizers frequently.

Children often are not as careful about washing their hands, not touching their eyes or noses, or covering their mouths when coughing or sneezing. Sick children may expose infant siblings, elderly relatives, and others who may be at high risk of complications from influenza.

The Public Health Agency of Canada recommends annual influenza immunization for persons six months of age and over to help protect you and your loved ones from influenza. Influenza immunization not only helps to prevent you from getting influenza but you will also be helping to prevent its spread. In addition, getting



HealthNotes

immunized helps to reduce sick time that can cause you to miss work, school, or sports.

The vaccine is 70 to 90 per cent effective in preventing influenza in healthy adults and children. The elderly, the frail, and those with weakened immune systems may not develop as much protection, though they should still get the vaccine because it can help reduce the severity of the illness. It is important that those around them be immunized.

This year, Ontario's Universal Influenza Immunization Program will begin somewhat later than in previous years due to a delay with vaccine production. In addition to the delay affecting Health Department influenza clinics, the vaccine delivery to physicians and local pharmacies will also be delayed. While the vaccine will be available later than normal, the supply will be plentiful; there will not be a vaccine shortage. The Halton Region Health Department will be hosting influenza clinics throughout Halton starting in mid-November. The clinics will continue into January. The influenza vaccine is free to all individuals who live, work, or attend school in Ontario. No appointments are necessary. Please wear a short-sleeved shirt.

To learn more about influenza or to find a clinic near you, please contact the Halton Region Health Department at 905-825-6000, toll free 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866), TTY 905-827-9833, or visit our website at www.halton.ca/flu

Health Notes is prepared by staff of the Halton Region Health Department



Acton Legion donates to hospital

Georgetown Hospital Foundation received a \$1,500 donation from Branch 197 of the Royal Canadian Legion (Acton) as Georgetown Hospital Foundation executive director KC Carruthers (left) accepted the cheque, joined by Josey Bonnette of Acton BIA and Branch 197 Legion members (from left) David Crook, Joyce Buchanan and Tom Grant. In addition to the \$1,500 to Georgetown, Branch 197 also donated \$1,500 to Milton District Hospital Foundation.

Photo by Ted Brown



Cooking for the United Way

Team Scotia, Acton branch— Fred Allen (Scotia McLeod financial planner), Sarah Allworth (senior personal banking officer, Acton), Angela Horobin (branch manager, Acton) and Trish D'Ambrosio (customer relations representative, Acton)— paired up with Sobeyes to help the United Way recently by selling hotdogs and hamburgers. It was part of their ongoing effort to raise \$2,000 for United Way of Halton Hills.

Photo by Chris Horobin

Exercise Your Mind

Read The Newspaper

Studies show that reading keeps your mind sharp. Give your brain a boost.

Read the Independent & Free Press and open your eyes and your mind to a world of information.

THE INDEPENDENT
& FREE PRESS



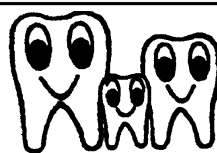
Baynes Physiotherapy
Georgetown

Telephone:

905-873-4964

232A Guelph St., Unit 10
(next to Ares Restaurant)

Same caring quality treatment since 1988



Dr. Anoop Sayal
& Associates

Family and Cosmetic Dentistry

877-CARE (2273)

Georgetown Market Place Mall
www.georgetowndental.com

The best fittings begin with *Naturalwear*.



Come in today to see the new silky-soft Harmony SILK breast forms. SILK forms are available in a variety of sizes and shapes, each offering unparalleled softness and comfort. Let our professional fitters take care of your post-mastectomy needs. Come in today and see the NEW! SILK forms, only from Naturalwear by Trulife.

www.diannemastectomy.com

Dianne's Mastectomy 905-454-5710
PROSTHESES • BRAS

www.diannemastectomy.com

The Safe Choice For Post Breast Surgery Women