



FOR RELEASE
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Another early start to flu season in Yukon

WHITEHORSE—Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of Health Dr. Brendan Hanley confirmed today that Yukon has the flu.

The first lab-confirmed case of influenza has occurred in rural Yukon, suggesting that the virus is already circulating the territory.

"For every lab confirmed case, we know there are many more cases that will go without being officially diagnosed," Hanley said.

Yukon's flu immunization clinics for the public began on October 26. Everyone over the age of six months can get free flu vaccines at their community health centre, the Whitehorse Health Centre, the Kwanlin Dün Health Centre or at special clinics held throughout the territory.

"Anyone who hasn't yet received their immunization against this year's flu virus is encouraged to do so, especially those with chronic conditions and those over the age of 65 years or under the age of five," Hanley said. "Last year's influenza came early and left late, so we could be in for something similar this winter."

For individuals who are otherwise healthy, influenza symptoms are generally mild to moderate. However, severe illness, complications and worsening of other health conditions can occur, especially among risk groups. Symptoms include the rapid onset of high fever, cough, sore throat, aches, pains and chills. Rest and symptomatic treatment are usually all that is needed.

People who suspect they have the flu are advised to stay home from work until they feel better. Those with severe symptoms or underlying medical conditions should get medical advice by either calling the Yukon HealthLine at 811 or consulting with their community nurse, family doctor or an emergency physician.

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