



FOR RELEASE
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Flu arrives early in Yukon

WHITEHORSE—Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Brendan Hanley today confirmed that Yukon is already seeing flu activity in Yukon communities.

"Typically, we don't see flu peaking in Yukon until late February or early March," Hanley said. "However, we now have seven lab confirmed cases in two Yukon communities, and reports of many other ill individuals. Usually, we are the last to see flu activity but we are seeing it much earlier than usual while activity elsewhere in Canada is low."

Yukon's flu immunization clinics for the general public began November 13. Everyone over the age of six months can still get a free flu vaccine by contacting their local health centre in rural Yukon communities, or Whitehorse Health Centre and Kwanlin Dun Health Centre which are still offering their regular drop-in immunization clinics.

"Anyone who hasn't yet received their immunization against this year's flu virus is encouraged to do so, especially those over the age of 65 years or under the age of five," Hanley added.

With flu showing up so early this year, Hanley expressed concern about how much flu activity can be expected in Yukon this year.

"For every lab confirmed case, we know we will have many more cases that will go without being officially diagnosed. I really encourage people to get their flu shot, if not for themselves, then to protect those around them. The more people who are protected against flu, the fewer people who will get sick," Hanley said.

In individuals who are otherwise healthy, flu is generally mild to moderate. However, severe illness, complications and worsening of other health conditions can occur, especially among risk groups. Symptoms include rapid onset of fever, cough, sore throat, aches and pains. Rest and symptomatic treatment are usually all that is needed. Individuals who suspect they have the flu, and don't want to see a doctor, should stay home from work until they are feeling better.

For more information on the seasonal flu vaccination and clinic dates visit the Health and Social Services website.

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