

December 5, 2022

Dear Families,

A few weeks ago, Dr. Andrew Lynk and I provided Nova Scotians with an update on respiratory illnesses in the province. While COVID-19 cases are declining, we are currently seeing an increase of viruses like colds, influenza and RSV circulating in our communities.

Although these viruses are mild for most children, they can be very serious for infants, toddlers and other children with health challenges. They can make some children sick enough to need to go to the emergency department or even be admitted to the hospital.

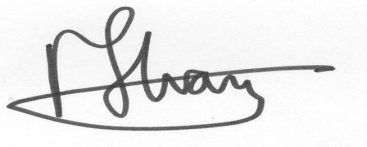
Working with my colleagues who specialize in child health and public health, we are asking all Nova Scotians to take steps to protect themselves, their loved ones, their schools, and their communities. The more everyone works together the healthier our communities will be.

**Here is what you can do to help:**

- 1) If your child is over 6 months of age, please make sure they get their influenza vaccine as soon as possible. Make sure everyone in the family also receives their flu vaccine as well. This will help protect other family members and friends.
- 2) Ensure you and your child are up to date on all vaccines, including tetanus, pertussis, measles and COVID-19.
- 3) If your child is sick, please have them stay home until they are feeling better. Once your child is able to return to school and activities, they should choose to wear a mask when around others for 2 to 3 days.
- 4) If you or a family member is feeling unwell, but have to visit a public indoor space, please wear a mask.
- 5) If at all possible, please don't let friends and relatives who are sick be around infants, young children and those with other health challenges.

If we all work together, fewer people will get sick, and we can have a significant impact on the spread of respiratory viruses in our homes and communities.

Thank you,



Dr. Robert Strang, with support from the Provincial Pediatric Working Group led by Dr. Jeannette Comeau (IWK Infectious Diseases Specialist), and Dr. Andrew Lynk (Chief of Pediatrics IWK/Dalhousie).