

## **MEDIA RELEASE:**

**For Immediate Release**

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January 10, 2017

With Flu season in full force, Norfolk General Hospital Emergency Department has seen an increase in the number of patients with influenza symptoms including fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle and body aches, headache and fatigue. Although the ED is appropriately prepared and staffed the increased volume of very sick patients has resulted in longer wait times for non-critical patients. Clinical staff is coping extremely well despite inpatient units operating at capacity.

Norfolk General Hospital is asking for the public's help in preventing the spread of influenza, especially to those who have reduced immunity.

ED physician Dr. Rejean Duwyn stated "We certainly have seen an increased rate throughout southern Ontario. Most people with the flu don't need medical attention. I would advise rest, hand hygiene and the flu shot, but if you are experiencing difficulty breathing and staying hydrated you should be coming in"

The best remedy and the best way to prevent the spread of the flu is to stay home and stay hydrated plus practice proper hand washing. The flu shot is still available at pharmacies and doctor's offices throughout the community. Seniors, in particular, are encouraged to get the vaccine if they haven't already done so.

Anyone not feeling well due to mild flu symptoms should be mindful that by staying away from the hospital and postponing visits to loved ones will avoid the risk of passing the flu on patients with weakened immune systems.

Please remember the emergency department is intended to provide emergency medical care for serious conditions such as stroke, heart attack, severe bleeding, head injury or other major trauma. Don't take a chance with anything that might be life-threatening, come to the emergency department.



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*“Our mission is to relieve illness and suffering, and help people live healthier lives.”*

