



## **H1N1 INFORMATION and POLICY**

There have been a number of confirmed cases of H1N1 (human swine influenza) in Alberta.

H1N1 (human swine influenza) is a respiratory illness that causes symptoms similar to those of regular human seasonal influenza. The virus is contagious to humans and it is believed to be spread by germs that are released into the air by coughs and sneezing and then breathed in by others. In addition, germs resting on hard surfaces such as counters and doorknobs are easily transmitted to the lungs by an individual touching a contaminated surface and then touching their mouth or nose.

Typical symptoms include (but are not limited to):

- Cough
- Fever/Chills
- Fatigue
- Sore throat
- Body aches/Headache
- Vomiting and Diarrhea (in children under 5 years of age)

The best prevention against H1N1 (human swine influenza) is to:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water, or use alcohol based hand sanitizer
- Cough and sneeze into your arm or sleeve
- Stay home if you are sick
- If your symptoms worsen, visit your doctor or walk in clinic
- Do not share drinking glasses, water bottles, mouth guards or eating utensils
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth unless you have just washed your hands

The Public Health Agency of Canada does not recommend that masks be worn. It has been demonstrated that wearing masks in public does little to prevent the communication of the virus as people often wear them incorrectly and contaminate them when taking them on and off.

**It is recommended that players/coaches/assistants carry personal size bottles of hand sanitizer with them for all practices and games.**

If any one on your team has influenza-like symptoms or has been in contact with someone who has H1N1 (human swine influenza), it is important to avoid close contact with others for at least seven days after your symptoms start. We feel that this is the joint responsibility of both the parent and the coaches. It is critical to the health and safety of others as this is the time when the illness can be spread to others. Players who display symptoms should be sent home immediately from practice and not allowed to play in the games. Then have parents carefully monitor all other players for symptoms. Until symptoms appear in other individuals, activities should carry on as per usual.

Basketball Alberta encourages all its community directors and their Coaches to be vigilant and take steps to ensure the health and wellbeing of their players. Specifically, **Coaches / team managers are strongly encouraged to:**

- Prevent the sharing of bottles among players
- Talk with players and parents on their team about the risks involved and the steps to prevent contagion, including keeping sick players at home
- Monitor their players and immediately send home those who obviously display the flu-like symptoms. Infected players or Coaches/Managers should avoid close contact with others (on the team) for at least seven days after symptoms start
- Have on hand bottles of hand sanitizer, or encourage their players to do the same

It will now be Basketball Alberta policy to **shake hands**. After each game it is recommended that each athlete and coach thoroughly wash their hands after each game.