Respiratory Syncytial Virus ("RSV")

What is it?	RSV is a virus that causes upper and lower respiratory tract infections. It can cause bronchiolitis and pneumonia in young children and infants. RSV is usually a mild disease that can be managed at home. Children who are at risk for more serious illness and hospitalization are: • Infants younger than 1 year of age (especially those between 6 weeks and 6 months of age) • Premature infants • Children and infants with breathing or heart problems • Children or infants with weakened immune systems Signs and symptoms of RSV often resemble the common cold and may include: ➢ Stuffy or runny nose (Nasal discharge is usually clear) ➢ Low grade fever or chills ➢ Cough ➢ Earache ➢ Rapid breathing or wheezing ➢ Listlessness, inactivity, decreased interest in surroundings ➢ Poor feeding The symptoms of RSV may resemble other illnesses. A diagnosis of RSV is made by a doctor or nurse practitioner.
How is it spread?	Through contact with infected secretions from the eyes, nose, and mouth of an infected child: ➢ Breathing air contaminated with the virus when an infected person has coughed or sneezed ➢ Touching the secretions from an infected child's eyes, nose, or mouth ➢ Touching surfaces that have been contaminated with the virus. The RSV virus can live on hard surfaces (e.g., toys, doorknobs) for many hours. It can survive on hands for 30 minutes. It can also live on soft surfaces (e.g., tissue, clothes, and towels).
Incubation period	Range is 2 – 8 days (usually 4 – 6 days)
When is the person contagious?	Usually for 3 – 8 days, starting right before the onset of symptoms
How to prevent spread of the illness to other children. 	Child can return to school or the child care facility when feeling well enough to take part in activities. ➢ Carefully dispose of (or clean, if applicable) articles soiled by discharges from an infected child's eyes, nose, or mouth. For more information, refer to Routine Practices. ***Handwashing is the best way to stop the spread of infections.***

There is no vaccine to prevent RSV. There is a medication to help prevent severe RSV illness in high risk infants. It is administered by the infant's doctor.

Influenza

What is it?	Influenza (the flu) is a respiratory illness caused by Influenza A and Influenza B viruses. Influenza season in Canada is usually November through April. Signs and symptoms of influenza may include: ➢ Fever ➢ Cough, sneezing, runny nose ➢ Headache ➢ Body aches and pain ➢ Exhaustion ➢ Sore throat ➢ Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea are more common in children than adults. Influenza is most serious for babies less than 2 years of age, adults over 65 years of age, and people with chronic illnesses.
How is it spread?	➢ Breathing in droplets containing influenza virus that have been coughed or sneezed into the air by an infected person. ➢ Direct contact with the hands of an infected person (e.g., shaking hands, holding hands). ➢ Contact with an object contaminated with the influenza virus (e.g., toys, furniture, doorknob, taps, computer keyboard, telephone, shopping cart handle). Influenza viruses can live for several hours on hard surfaces. Caregivers may get the flu virus on their hands by assisting a child to use a tissue and then spread it to other children by touching them.
Incubation period	Usually 1 – 4 days from contact with an infected person
When is the person contagious?	Usually from 1 day before to 5 days after symptoms develop (up to 7 days after symptoms develop for young children)
How to prevent spread of the illness to other children. 	Child may attend school or child care if they feel well enough to take part in activities. Carefully dispose of (or clean, if applicable) articles contaminated with nose and throat secretions of an infected child. For more information, refer to Routine Practices. ***Handwashing is the best way to stop the spread of infections.***

Influenza vaccine is recommended and provided free for:

- ***children 6 to 23 months of age***
- ***household contacts and those providing regular child care to children 0 to 23 months of age***
- ***children and adults with a health condition that places them at high risk for influenza.***