



## HEALTH ADVISORY

### RE: H1N1 Virus and General Hygiene as Flu Season Approaches

#### 1.0 The Flu Virus

With considerable speculation as to the impact which the H1N1 virus could have on Canadians this fall and winter, the following specific recommendations and general hygiene tips are being issued to BC Soccer member Clubs, Districts and Leagues to help everyone take steps in preventing the spread of this virus and all other influenza viruses in the coming months.

This advisory is being issued as part of the SportMed Soccer program in conjunction with SportMed Safety, resources offered to the BC Soccer membership in partnership with SportMedBC, the network of more than 500 sport medical and paramedical practitioners operating in British Columbia.

#### 2.0 The Symptoms

Influenza (including H1N1) is caused by viruses and is generally spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Signs and symptoms of influenza-like illness include: the acute onset of respiratory symptoms with fever and cough and one or more of the following symptoms: sore throat, muscle aches, joint pain, or weakness. In children under the age of five, gastrointestinal symptoms may also be present and fever may not be prominent.

#### 3.0 The Precautions

Here are 10 simple, common sense precautions that can help BC Soccer Clubs, Districts and Leagues safeguard the health of players, coaches, referees, administrators and their families during the upcoming season.

- i) Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- ii) Urge players to report ALL illnesses to their parents and coach and/or team trainer. Instruct parents to keep their children away from the soccer environment if they are showing any signs of infectious illness or virus;
- iii) See a health care provider as needed and ensure full recovery prior to returning to play (at least 24 hours of no symptoms without medication);
- iv) Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water. This is one of the best preventions we can recommend. Keep alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers in sideline first aid kits and use when soap and water are not available;
- v) Talk to your players about covering their mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing into their arm as opposed to their hands. If using tissues, ensure they are thrown away immediately after use;



- vi) Try not to touch your own eyes, mouth or nose when in the soccer environment. Individuals can become ill by touching a surface contaminated with germs and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth;
- vii) Use your OWN water bottle and clearly label it with your name. Avoid direct lip contact with the container and do not use sport drink bottles that don't squirt;
- viii) Do not share towel, clothing, bar soap or other personal items such as razors;
- ix) Protect your immune system - get sufficient sleep, eat nutritious foods (coloured fruits and vegetables) and avoid overtraining;
- x) As an additional precaution, clubs have the option of considering implementing alternate ways to shake opponent's hands at the end of the match – a group cheer or a pass-by without contact.

#### **4.0 Links for More Information**

For up to date health advisories and more information pertaining to the H1N1 virus, SportMedBC and BC Soccer recommend Clubs, Districts and Leagues visit the following links to the Health Canada Bulletin and the Government of BC website.

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/index-eng.php>

[www.gov.bc.ca/h1n1](http://www.gov.bc.ca/h1n1)

#### **5.0 SportMed Soccer**

SportMed Soccer is a new resource program for the BC Soccer community of member Clubs, Districts and Leagues. The program features simple tips in Sport Training for players and their parents, along with relevant information in Sport Medicine and Sport Science applied to the game of soccer. SportMed Soccer includes information and tips on nutrition, hydration, recovery, injury prevention and basic first aid treatment. It is a partnership between BC Soccer, the provincial association responsible for the promotion and development of the game in British Columbia, and SportMedBC, the professional not-for-profit society representing the network of more than 500 sport medical and paramedical practitioners in the province. SportMedBC also provides on-site Sport Safety support for BC Soccer and its member Clubs, Districts and Leagues.

[www.bcsoccer.net](http://www.bcsoccer.net)

[www.sportmedbc.com](http://www.sportmedbc.com)



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