



November brings cooler weather, more time indoors and cold and flu season. This month we feature articles on how to stay healthy and avoid cold and flu bugs that are going around at this time of year.

We also have an interesting article on radon gas - what it is and why this is the time of year to test your home.

Finally if the cooler weather, and darker days have you feeling a bit cranky - you may not be alone - if your child is prone to temper tantrums check out our final article for tips to manage them.

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FLU AND COLD SEASON IS HERE

It's the time of year when sneezing, coughing, and runny noses become more common. How can you tell if you or your child has a cold or influenza (the flu)? A cold is usually a milder illness than influenza. Cold symptoms can make you feel uncomfortable for a few days, whereas influenza can make you feel ill for a few days to weeks. Influenza is also more serious and can cause other health problems like pneumonia. Check out this [health file](#) for more information on the difference between colds and the flu.

Prevention is the best medicine.



Here are a few tips to help you and your family stay healthy:

- Get a flu shot! When everyone in your family (six months of age and older) gets the flu shot,

it helps protect those who are too young to get vaccinated. Flu shots are free for many people including young children (6-59 months) and their families.

- Wash your hands, wash your hands, and wash your hands! Especially after coughing, sneezing or wiping your nose, your child's nose, or being in contact with someone who is ill.
- Keep babies away from people who have a cold or flu whenever possible.
- Teach children to cough into their sleeve or elbow or to use a tissue. Avoid sharing toys that kids place in their mouths until the toys have been cleaned.
- Avoid sharing cups, utensils, or towels until they have been washed.

For more information on the flu vaccine and to find a free flu clinic near you, visit our [website](#).

TIME TO GET THE FLU SHOT

It's that time of year again... Influenza (also called the flu) spreads when a person comes into contact with droplets from an infected person who coughs or sneezes. Symptoms can include fever, headache, runny nose, sore throat, or cough. For vulnerable populations such as young children and older adults, influenza can cause serious complications.



The best ways to help protect yourself and those around you from influenza are to get immunized, wash your hands frequently, and to cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue. If you are sick, stay home, and keep sick children away from daycares and schools.

The flu shot is free for those at risk of complications from influenza and those in contact with people at risk. This includes:

- All children six to 59 months of age
- Household contacts and caregivers of infants and children from birth to 59 months of age
- People 65 years and older and their caregivers/household contacts
- People of any age in residential care facilities
- Children and adults with chronic health conditions and their household contacts
- Pregnant women at any stage of pregnancy during the influenza season and their household contacts
- Visitors to hospitals, health centres and residential care facilities
- And more - for a complete list visit our [website](#)

Interior Health's public clinics for those who are eligible for a free flu shot will begin in early November. The flu shot is also available at many doctor's offices, pharmacies and walk-in clinics - those who are not eligible for the free vaccine will be required to pay a fee. To find an influenza immunization clinic or provider near you, watch for local announcements on dates and times in your community; or contact your local public health centre, physician office or pharmacy. You can also find a flu clinic near you by visiting the Influenza [Clinic Locator](#) on the ImmunizeBC website.

TEST YOUR HOME FOR RADON GAS

Have you heard of radon gas? It is a naturally occurring gas found in the ground throughout the world and also the second leading cause of lung cancer.

Most homes that are in contact with the ground will contain some amount of radon gas. Radon becomes a concern when it reaches high levels. According to Health Canada, about seven per cent of the Canadian homes have radon levels that may be putting residents at risk. Here in the B.C. Interior we have some "hot spot" areas with high radon levels in approximately 40 per cent of homes.

Radon can enter a home through the foundation, including concrete and more commonly through cracks in a foundation or dirt floor such as in older crawl spaces. It can also enter a home through the ventilation system.

The good news is testing your home is easy and inexpensive. Testing involves placing a small puck-like kit within the lowest area of the home that could be occupied for at least four hours per day. The kit should remain in that location for a minimum of three months and then can be sent to a laboratory to get the results. If your home has high radon levels, basic measures can be taken to address the problem.

Test kits are available for purchase from: BC Lung Association - order [online](#) or call 1-800-665-LUNG (5864).

More information on radon can be found on the Interior Health [website](#).



MANAGING TEMPER TANTRUMS

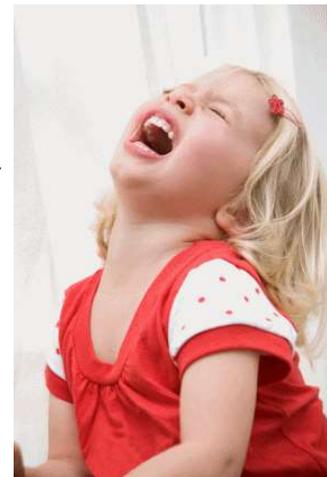
It's the moment every parent dreads ... a toddler temper tantrum in a public place. When it comes to temper tantrums, [prevention](#) is always the best approach. But let's face it, some temper tantrums can seem to come out of nowhere. Temper tantrums are usually a response to extreme frustration and, like it or not, they are perfectly normal toddler behaviour.

So what can you do if you are faced with a temper tantrum in the mall, grocery store or anywhere else for that matter?

Ignore it - If your toddler is not getting your attention there is a good chance the tantrum will stop. Try standing a short distance away from your child and continuing to do what you are doing. Stay close enough to see your child without focusing directly on them. During this time try not speaking to your child - if you need to speak keep your voice calm and quiet.

Try to distract them - Re-direct their attention to something else. If necessary, remove your child from the situation. Some situations like a busy, noisy store may simply be too over-whelming at the time.

For more information on preventing and managing temper tantrums visit [HealthLinkBC](#).



NEWS YOU CAN USE



STAYING SAFE ON THE ROADS THIS FALL

Autumn is officially here and with its arrival come shorter, darker, and wetter days. School is back in session, and children are walking to class.

Fall means an increase in what we officially call "pedestrian strikes" in the hospital Emergency Department. When a person is hit by a car, the pedestrian never wins and there can be terrible results.

Learn more out [staying safe on the roads](#) during darker autumn days.

Sources and where to get more info

[Interior Health - Search for Health Centres under "location type"](#)

[Interior Health](#)

[HealthLinkBC](#)

[ImmunizeBC](#)

[Take Action on Radon](#)

This e-newsletter is an Interior Health project to provide quick and easy health tips for new parents and caregivers of children ages 0 to 2 years. Your comments and topic suggestions are welcome! Simply email us at: healthmatters@interiorhealth.ca.

For more info or to attend a free child health clinic, contact your local Public Health Centre. You can find contact info online at: www.interiorhealth.ca or look it up under Interior Health in the blue pages of your local phone book.

Sincerely,
Interior Health Authority



Interior Health