Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses.

- **Influenza type A and B** cause the majority of influenza illness in humans.
- **Transmission occurs** through close contact with others and contact with contaminated surfaces.
- **Healthy people** can spread influenza before showing any signs of illness.
- **Symptoms are often confused** with influenza-like illnesses like the common cold.
- **Complications such as pneumonia** may lead to hospitalization or even death.
- An average **12,200** hospitalizations and approximately **3,500** deaths are attributed to influenza annually in Canada.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommends all Canadians 6 months of age and older be immunized against influenza.

- New strains of influenza appear every year. This is why immunization is required annually.
- Influenza vaccines CANNOT give you influenza.
- Influenza vaccines are SAFE and REDUCE the spread of influenza viruses.

Reference:

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