

## Knowing Your Care Options can help avoid trips to the Emergency Department

*HNHBhealthline.ca provides information about Non-Emergency Medical Services open during the holidays*

**For Immediate Release**

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The winter season brings a higher demand for health services and with holiday closures between Christmas and New Year's, there can be longer than usual waits for people who don't need immediate emergency care. Knowing where to go for non-emergency health care is vital for many individuals and families at this time of year.

By taking steps to stay healthy and by being prepared, people can have a more positive experience if they need care over the holidays. Simple things like getting a [free flu shot](#), filling all your prescriptions before the holidays, and washing your hands well and often can help you stay healthy.

If you have non-emergency medical needs during the holiday season, [HNHBhealthline.ca](http://HNHBhealthline.ca) is a free online resource featuring up-to-date information on available services that are open in communities across Hamilton, Niagara, Haldimand, Norfolk, Burlington and Brant. This one stop shop for information online can help people find medical resources available during statutory holidays so they won't have to visit a hospital emergency department.

The Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN has also been working collaboratively with health service providers, primary care providers, hospitals, public health, community health centres and local paramedic services across the region to prepare effectively for the holiday surge and flu season by making sure people can access the care they need, where and when they need it this winter season.

### **QUOTE**

“With the holiday season approaching, we know hospital volumes can go up by as much as 15 per cent. Hospitals managing an influx of patients with non-emergency health care needs, can lead to overcrowding and longer wait times. We encourage members of the public to access [HNHBhealthline.ca](http://HNHBhealthline.ca) when they are looking for non-emergency medical services over the holidays.”

– Donna Cripps, Chief Executive Officer Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN

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