

## Knowing Care Options Key to Avoiding Trips to The Emergency Department This Season

*CentralEastHealthline.ca Source for Supporting Patient Access to Non-Emergency Medical  
Services Over the Holidays*

### NEWS

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The winter season brings an increased demand for health services along with holiday closures between Christmas and New Year's. Influenza and seasonal injuries, such as fractures, result in longer than usual waits for those who don't require 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 greatly improve their experience if they need care over the holidays. Simple actions like getting a [free flu shot](#), ensuring you have all your prescriptions filled before the holidays, and washing your hands often can help you stay healthy.

If you have non-emergency medical needs during the holiday season, [CentralEasthealthline.ca](#) is a free, comprehensive online resource featuring up-to-date information on services that are open and available across communities in the Central East region of Ontario.

The Holiday Hours page (<https://www.centraleasthealthline.ca/libraryContent.aspx?id=22240>) lists information on hours of service, contact numbers and maps for medical walk-in clinics, urgent care centres, pharmacies with extended hours, and crisis intervention assistance. This online resource helps inform people of medical resources other than hospital emergency departments available during statutory holidays.

The Central East 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 to ensure patient care is optimized during the winter season.

### QUOTE

“With the holiday season approaching, we know the perennial surge increases hospital volumes by as much as 15 per cent. These increased volumes affect emergency and acute care services at all of our hospitals and other community service providers as they contend with an influx of patients with non-emergency health care needs. This can lead to overcrowding and longer wait times. We encourage members of the public to access [CentralEasthealthline.ca](#) when they are looking for non-emergency medical services over the holidays.”

- Stewart Sutley, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Central East LHIN

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