

NEWS

Does travel broaden exposure to the flu?

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Money talks – especially when you get sick.

Sick or injured Canucks might also suffer some culture shock when they're asked to pay upfront for their treatment, says Bzowey.

RBC, for example, makes their payments upfront for those with coverage.

Keeping informed about what coverage you have, and how to get max coverage, seems like a no-brainer for people traveling the world these days.



Dr. Colin Saldanha

Most health insurance firms have a hotline to call if you do get into trouble.

Most operate 24/7 and act as advocates on your behalf when confronted by foreign-speaking staffers and doctors.

With wicked bugs out there just waiting to chow down on your immune system, check with your bank, insurance agent, or doctor on what you need to lessen your risk and keep you safe. If not, you might really get sick when you find out the financial folly that awaits you.

Be alert to all the travel advisories regarding swine flu, and all other dangers (hurricane season?) that lurk in faraway lands.

Most travel insurance policies have clauses related to travel advisories issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Cancellation insurance is always a good option if you're unsure of your travel plans these days.

Airlines might even allow you to change your trip if you play the "health" card.

Travel insurance covers emergencies like hospital visits, medical procedures and lost baggage.

But each policy is different.

If your employer's plan covers all these extras, all the better.

If not, paying a few extra bucks for some peace of mind is smart and pro-active.

Remember: don't panic, think clearly, and enjoy your business trip.

Heck, anything's better than being stuck in rush hour traffic.

As a further public service, Dr. Colin Saldanha, head of the Peel Travel Clinic, was quizzed on the do's and don'ts of the H1N1 virus, and how to take travel precautions.

Here are highlights from that interview.

Q: Doctor..... the flu season is always a concern, in particular for people who are traveling abroad. What kind of precautions would you recommend while on vacation to

lessen the chance of contracting a virus/H1N1?

A: The novel H1N1 flu virus is unique because it is a combination of genes from pig (swine), bird and human flu viruses. While some cases may have been severe, most have been similar to the seasonal flu and have not resulted in severe illnesses.

The majority of cases have occurred in children and younger adults. Before traveling abroad, you must visit your family physician or a travel clinic. They will advise you of any travel advisories of places you intend to visit. Ensure you are up-to-date with your routine immunizations including the seasonal influenza/H1N1 vaccine when available. Do not travel if you are sick or if you fall into the high risk category e.g. children, elderly, pregnant women or those with multiple medical problems.

Take travel medical insurance. When on vacation pay attention to local health and security announcements. Be aware that some countries are checking the health of travelers before entering and exiting their countries.

Follow routine hygienic precautions such as:

Wash your hands often, for at least 20 seconds with soap and running water specially after coughing or sneezing.

You may use an alcohol based hand gel (containing at least 60 per cent alcohol) when soap is not available and hands are not visibly dirty.

When coughing or sneezing do so into your upper sleeve and not your hands.

Avoid close contact with sick people.

What are the typical symptoms of the flu/H1N1?

The symptoms of the H1N1 flu virus and the seasonal flu virus are similar and include:

- Fever
- Runny/stuffy nose
- Cough
- Sore throat
- There may also be bodyache, fatigue, chills and headache as well as lack of appetite, diarrhea and vomiting.

Q: What should I do if I think I have these symptoms?

A: If you have these symptoms before you travel, stay home and avoid travel for seven days after you get sick or at least 48 hours after you have stopped having symptoms, whichever is longer. While on vacation stay indoors and avoid contact with other individuals. Follow routine hygienic precautions as above. Drink plenty of fluids (non alcoholic) and keep well hydrated. If symptoms persist for more than 24 hours see a physician (a list can be obtained from the nearest Canadian Embassy or Consulate). You may consider taking a travel health kit with basic first aid and medical supplies

Is it a cold or H1N1 flu?

Symptom	Cold	H1N1 Flu
Fever	Fever is rare with a cold.	Fever is usually present with the flu in up to 80 per cent of all flu cases. A temperature of 100° F or higher for 3 to 4 days is associated with the flu.
Coughing	A hacking, productive (mucus-producing) cough is often present with a cold.	A non-productive (non-mucus-producing) cough is usually present with the flu (sometimes referred to as dry cough).
Aches	Slight body aches and pains can be part of a cold.	Severe aches and pains are common with the flu.
Stuffy Nose	Stuffy nose is commonly present with a cold and typically resolves spontaneously within a week.	Stuffy nose is not commonly present with the flu.
Chills	Chills are uncommon with a cold.	60 per cent of people who have the flu experience chills.
Tiredness	Tiredness is fairly mild with a cold.	Tiredness is moderate to severe with the flu.
Sneezing	Sneezing is commonly present with a cold.	Sneezing is not common with the flu.
Sudden Symptoms	Cold symptoms tend to develop over a few days.	The flu has a rapid onset within 3-6 hours. The flu hits hard and includes sudden symptoms like high fever, aches and pains.
Headache	A headache is fairly uncommon with a cold.	A headache is very common with the flu, present in 80 per cent of flu cases.
Sore Throat	Sore throat is commonly present with a cold.	Sore throat is not commonly present with the flu.
Chest Discomfort	Chest discomfort is mild to moderate with a cold.	Chest discomfort is often severe with the flu.

which may include an anti-viral medication and analgesics prescribed by your family physician. However, this should be taken following the advice of a physician after

assessment.

You can call the Peel Travel Clinic in Mississauga (550 Matheson Blvd. W. Suite 107 (905) at 890-3143 or (905) 890-3143.

Law summit on financing

BY MURRAY GOTTHEIL

From a global perspective, money may be tight, but "there are still options for borrowers," says Ted Mallet, VP research and chief economist of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB). "Small business as a group is the most profitable segment for the banks, and banks have learned from previous recessions."

Dan Leslie of TD Bank agrees. "In the last three months, we've added a significant amount of new businesses. We also recognize the benefits of relationships, and continue to support our clients."

However, some business experts question the ease of dealing with banks right now. "Traditional banks are being a lot more selective in approving loans. They make it look as if they're using the same benchmarks, but since most businesses are experiencing dramatically reduced profits, achieving the same benchmarks is very difficult," says James Phillipson, financing specialist at Mastermind Solutions Inc.

Phillipson was an attendee at the 2009 Business Law Summit sponsored by Mississauga law firm Pallett Valo. The summit focused on the borrowing needs of small businesses.

Mallet said members tell him financial institutions are indeed doing a good job of supporting their existing client base, but that "switching institutions can be hard."

Lenders, it seems, are asking more questions, and certain sectors, such as automotive and construction, are currently seen as risky. That can make alternative sources of capital attractive.

One alternative is factoring. Rick Sabourin of RBG Receivables runs a financial boutique offering everything from short-term bridge loans to factoring. "We serve business people, especially entrepreneurs, and tailor solutions. With factoring, we don't look at your net worth – it's the credit quality of

your debtors. Our question is whether your receivables will be fully collectible," Sabourin explained.

Another alternative is asset-based lending. For Deborah Cullen of BMO's asset-based lending group, the financial crisis has created a boom. "We've seen 43 per cent growth, year-over-year." Cullen's group lends money against assets, which can "help companies going through transition," she explains. While asset-based lending is expensive to arrange because "due diligence costs money," clients may be delighted with the deal.

"The panel was excellent," said Peter Andreana, CFP, a partner at Continuum II, who advises business owners. "A lot of people go to big banks and think if they get a 'no,' that's the end of the road. It was great to see the options."

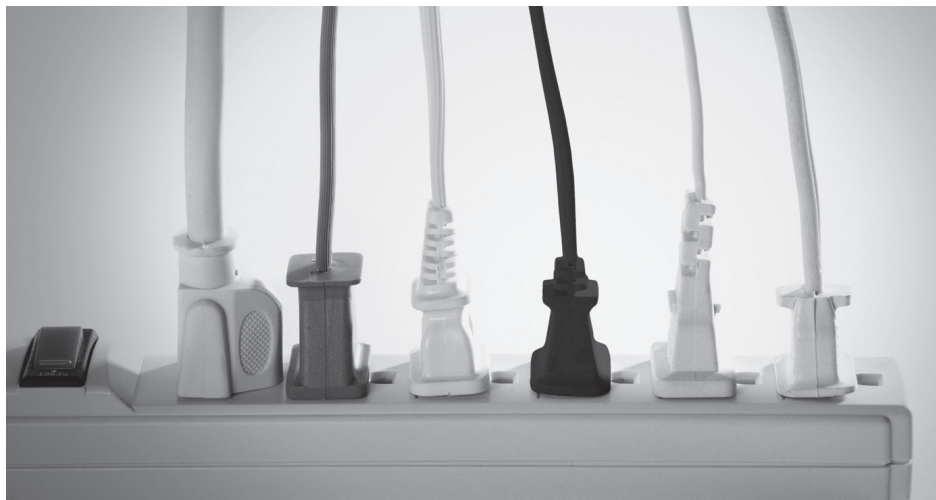
Businesses can always turn to Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), a source of financing, management consulting and venture capital. Ian MacFadden says BDC collaborates with chartered banks to ensure access to capital, especially in times like these.

Business owners contemplating succession plans or buying out a partner often turn to Larry Klar of The Succession Fund. This group buys shares in family businesses, offering a solution to owners facing changing circumstances. "The fund becomes a shareholder," Klar says.

However doing such a deal means "you get a business partner at the Board level and must enter into a new Shareholders' Agreement."

Overall, the panel agreed that was that money is available, but the price depends on the risk involved. "We structure with tiered pricing," explained Russell Garrard of National Bank. "We price for risk."

Murray Gottheil, a senior member of Pallett Valo's Business Law Practice and Family Business Law Group, hosted the 2009 Business Law Summit.



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