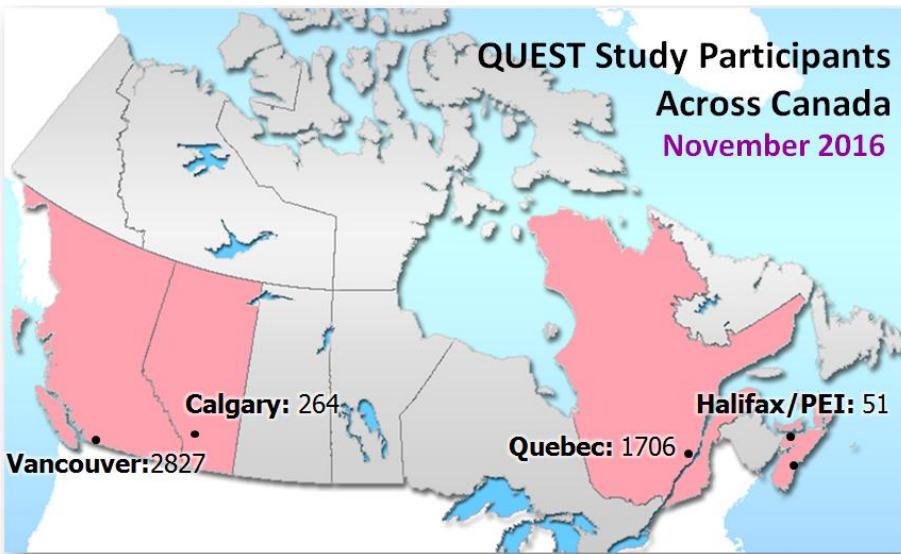




NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER



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Refer A Friend to our [website](#)! When **they** fill out the Contact Us form, **you** will be entered to win a gift card!

Contest of the Month

What inspires you to participate in research?

[Email us](#) your answers for your chance to win a gift certificate!

Common Germs (and how to avoid getting sick!)

By Claire Pitcher, Registered Nurse

Have you ever gotten sick and wondered, “how in the world did I catch that germ?” Despite best efforts to stay healthy, most people get sick occasionally. This can be especially true for people who live, work or play in close proximity to others. For example, maybe you’ve noticed your entire sports team has caught the same cold! Or for readers who live in close quarters with many other people at a university/college residence, you might have found it difficult to avoid your sick neighbours! This month, we’re going to talk about a few common germs and ways you can stay healthy.

A common cold or the flu?

When someone is coughing and sneezing, we sometimes assume they have ‘the flu’ (short for influenza virus). Usually a flu comes with a high fever, headache, muscle aches and pretty serious fatigue/lethargy. Actually, if you have a cough, runny nose and sneezing, it’s more likely you have a bacteria or virus other than the flu! It’s also important to remember that common

Congratulations to our

October Contest Winner!!

We sent her a Starbucks Gift card!

colds don't need to be treated with antibiotics. One of the best ways to prevent respiratory (breathing) illnesses is to get the annual flu vaccine and to practice good hand hygiene!

Norovirus and Rotavirus

Sometimes we use the catch-all term "stomach flu" to describe stomach germs that make us throw up or have diarrhea. However, as mentioned before, influenza mainly causes respiratory (lung) illnesses and not gastrointestinal (stomach) illnesses. Germs that more commonly cause stomach illnesses are norovirus and rotavirus. One of the most common ways these viruses spread is through fecal-oral contamination or poor hand hygiene (not washing hands well enough after going to the washroom.) The best way to prevent the spread of these stomach bugs is to practice really good hand washing (using warm soap and water; washing for 20 seconds; drying hands with a clean towel). While there is a vaccine available to protect infants against rotovirus (because this virus is most common amongst infants and young children), there isn't currently a norovirus vaccine or a rotavirus vaccine for adults.

Meningitis

The term "meningitis" describes when one of the linings of the brain becomes inflamed. There are many different types of meningitis but all types can cause serious symptoms (eg. severe headache, fever, muscle rigidity, etc.) as well as long-term health consequences and even death. Bacterial meningitis can lead to infections such as Meningitis B, which is particularly common amongst older teens/young adult, especially those living in close quarters such a dorms. This germ is spread primarily through kissing, sneezing and coughing. A great way to protect yourself against meningitis is to get vaccinated against the most common strains of this infection. Vaccines that protect against meningitis types A, C, W, Y, and B are available. If you have questions about which vaccine(s) you may be eligible for, it's best to speak directly with a health care provider (doctor or public health nurse).

If you have questions about these or other infections, we encourage you to talk to your parents, a doctor, or a nurse. For more information on "Is this a cold or a flu?", you can visit this great website:

<http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/publications/diseases-conditions-maladies-affections/table-cold-flu-grippe-rhume-tableau/index-eng.php>

Currently enrolled:
4848 GIRLS

Our target:
8666 GIRLS



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