

Navigating COVID-19

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated March 13, 2020

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Information to Support Community Members

1. Where can I find the most up to date information to share with community members about COVID-19?

Please direct community members to frequently updated, reliable web sources. See links to reliable web sources below:

- **HealthLinkBC:** <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/coronavirus-covid-19>
- **BCCDC:** <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>
- **Health Canada:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/frequently-asked-questions.html>
- **WHO:** <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
- **WHO:** <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>
- **FNHA:** <https://www.fnha.ca/about/news-and-events/news/information-on-novel-coronavirus>

2. What is respiratory etiquette and how does this help prevent the spread of COVID-19?

Respiratory Etiquette includes:

- washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands;
- avoiding close contact with people who are sick;
- coughing or sneezing into your elbow and not your hands; and
- staying home if you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others.

COVID-19 spreads through droplets that come from the mouth or the nose of someone that is sick. Following these measures will help to prevent community transmission of COVID-19, as well as the common cold and flu.

3. What is the Canadian Government doing to screen travelers at airports? Where can I find the most up to date information about travel advisories?

Please see <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/latest-travel-health-advice.html>

Travel and gathering recommendations are changing daily, please refer to Joint Statements by the Health Minister and Provincial Medical Health officer found here:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/ministries/health>

4. What is the recommendation for hosting or attending public gatherings in light of possible COVID-19 community transmission?

As per the Joint Statement by the BC Ministry of Health and the Provincial Medical Health Officer on March 12, 2020, in an effort to slow transmission of COVID-19 and protect our communities, gatherings with more than 250 people have been cancelled. Even if a gathering has less than 250 people attending, it would be up to the individuals to make a determination of whether or not they should attend based on individual risk (ie, Elders and high risk population). Risk-informed decision-making for mass gatherings is recommended. Please see <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirusinfection/health-professionals/mass-gatherings-risk-assesment.html>

5. How do community members care for a family member with sick with COVID-19 at home?

Please direct community members to PHAC's Advice for Caregivers: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/how-to-care-for-person-with-covid-19-at-home-advice-for-caregivers.html>

Clinical Information for Community Health Nurses

1. Where can I find the most up to date clinical resources for Health Professionals in British Columbia?

BCCDC is regularly updating provincial clinical resources for Health Professionals. Please refer to their webpage: [http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/novel-coronavirus-\(covid-19\)](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/novel-coronavirus-(covid-19))

Please also refer to your Regional Health Authority MHO updates for the latest guidance in your region. A link to MHO updates from BC Regional Health Authorities is found at the bottom of FNHA's COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Resources for First Nations Community Health Care Providers webpage: <https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/communicable-disease-control/coronavirus>

2. What information is available from FNHA to help me prepare for the possibility of community transmission of COVID-19?

Ensure your Community's Communicable Disease Emergency Response Plan (Formerly known as Pandemic Influenza Plan) is up to date and has been tested (i.e. tabletop exercise). If your Communicable Disease Emergency Response Plan is out of date, please download a copy from <https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/communicable-disease-control/coronavirus>

Please refer to FNHA's COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Resources for First Nations Community Health Care Providers for the most up to date resources and guidance. <https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/communicable-disease-control/coronavirus>

3. What messaging should I give to community members if they are symptomatic?

The provincial recommendation regarding the appropriate process at this time is for community members to self-isolate and call 811. Acutely ill clients would seek medical care at the local acute care settings. If the community member needs to seek medical attention, advise the community member to call ahead to local facilities so they can prepare in advance.

4. If I encounter a suspected case of COVID-19, what are my first steps?

As per [FNHA COVID-19 Guidance for Health Centres and Nursing Stations](#):

All Health Care Providers must report all patients presenting with signs and symptoms and exposure criteria consistent with COVID-19 infection to their Regional Health Authority's Medical Health Officer (MHO) via telephone. MHOs are available 24/7 via telephone.

- If unable to reach the Regional provincial CD team or MHO directly, leave a message.
- If outside of business hours, call the MHO on call after hours line
- Refer to FNHA CD Management Resources: FNHA Regions document OR your Regional Health Authority for detailed contact information
- Inform your Community Nursing Manager and the FNHA CD Management team (cdmgmt@fnha.ca) or 1-844-364-2232 of all COVID-19 investigations and/or for further guidance

Please also refer to <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Covid-19-Case-Identification-and-Client-Flow-in-Health-Centres-and-Nursing-Stations.pdf>

5. What is the recommended Personal Protective Equipment for COVID-19? How much Personal Protective Equipment do I need? Where do I order PPE?

Health care facilities providing direct patient care should have Personal Protective Equipment for all modes of transmission: contact, droplet, and airborne. These will include the following:

- Gloves (nitrile would be preferred)
- Isolation gowns (minimum CSA/AAMI fluid resistant level 1)
- Procedure masks (ear-loop would be preferred due to ease of application)
- Face Shields (preference would be disposable as no reprocessing needed)
- N95 masks (fit testing will be required to know which ones to purchase)

Additional supplies listed below are important to have on hand but are not required for COVID-19 precautions:

- Disposable fluid impermeable Boot covers
- Disposable fluid impermeable Hood
- Disposable fluid impermeable apron

FNHA CD Management team has provided a tool to use to calculate recommended quantity of PPE to have on hand taking into account restock times, community size, and other factors. You can see the tool [here](#) (it is the link to an excel file under the heading Personal Protective Equipment).

Supply of PPE for Health Centres and Nursing Stations in community are part of regular operations of those facilities. Please refer to your regular process of ordering PPE Supplies. Personal protective equipment is an occupational health employer requirement for health care staff. This includes N95 mask fit testing.

6. Will there be PPE provided to Communities now that a Pandemic has been declared?

The CDPPH team has put in a request. Once the team has more details as to what is available and how it will be distributed, the team will let Community Health Nurses know via the cdc@fnha.ca email distribution list.

7. Are N95 masks required? Where can I get fit testing done?

COVID-19 is spread by coming into contact with droplets of infected persons. Therefore, N95 masks are not required for community members. N95 masks (in lieu of surgical masks) are only indicated for health care staff if staff perform aerosol generating medical procedures (AGMPs). Examples of AGMPs are open suctioning of the respiratory tract, intubation and extubation procedures, bronchoscopy, cardiopulmonary resuscitation with bag valve mask ventilation, bronchoscopy and broncho-alveolar lavage, nasopharyngeal aspirates, washes, and scoping, suctioning of the respiratory tract.

In British Columbia, it is an Occupational Health requirement that fit-testing be completed annually for health care staff. As of March 6, 2020, the BC Ministry of Health made the following recommendations:

- Effective immediately, health authorities facing an imminent shortage of N95 respirators shall allow workers who have had their respirator fit test within the previous 2 years to continue to use respirators without additional testing.
- Effective immediately, health authorities facing an imminent shortage of N95 respirators shall ensure these same workers perform a fit check or seal check prior to the use of the respirator, and where that check reveals an issue with the seal, a full fit test will be performed.
- Effective immediately, health authorities not facing an imminent shortage of N95 respirators shall perform annual fit tests as required by section 8.40(2.1) of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.

If there is no one trained and designated as a fit tester in health care facility, an option for communities may be to contact the local Public Health Unit or an established contact within the Regional Health Authority that may be able to visit you and provide fit testing for health care staff. Occasionally, there are Train the Trainer workshops hosted by educators in the Regional Health Authority that can be accessed. FNHA CD Management team is able to lend fit testing kits to communities once there is a trainer able to use the kit.

8. What does the declaration of a global pandemic mean?

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global Pandemic due the number of cases that have now spread throughout the world. Declaration of a pandemic allows for another level of support to be offered. Internationally, this allows for international support and resources to be made available to countries that may lack the infrastructure and ability to manage their public's healthcare related to COVID-19. In Canada, this means support at both provincial and federal levels can be activated.

9. Are there changes to Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures in a pandemic?

No. Continue with current routine IPC measures and additional precautions (i.e. Point of Care Risk Assessment, masking of symptomatic clients, hand washing, contact and droplet precautions, and equipment and environmental cleaning and disinfection).

10. What can I do to ease community members concerns?

Continue to share key messages of what community members can do to prevent the spread of infection for themselves, their family and their community.

A template PowerPoint has been created with key messages you can use in communication with community members or through social media posts. Please see "COVID-19 Information (PPTX)" on <https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/communicable-disease-control/coronavirus>

A declaration of a pandemic can create overwhelming concern and anxiety. It can also bring up historical trauma and fear related to the spread of communicable diseases in First Nations Communities. Nurses working in First Nations Communities are well equipped to answer questions from community members with a trauma-informed and culturally safe approach.

As a reminder, the KUU-US Crisis Line Society provides a First Nations and Indigenous specific crisis line available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, toll-free from anywhere in British Columbia. The KUU-US Crisis Line can be reached toll-free at 1-800-588-8717. Alternatively, individuals can call direct into the Youth Line at 250-723-2040 or the Adult Line at 250-723-4050.

11. What do I do if there are rumors in the community or on social media of a contact of COVID-19 in my community?

If able to, please contact the source of the rumor to attempt to assess the validity of the rumor. Individuals assessed as potential contacts would have received an alert from

Public Health stating they had been exposed and would have been provided instructions to self-isolate.

If a community member has been advised by the Regional Health Authority MHO to self-isolate they will receive instructions, similar to <http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/Epid/CD%20Manual/Chapter%201%20-%20CDC/COVID19-Self-isolation-for-contacts-travellers.pdf>

If you are approached by community members with concerns about a contact in your community, the ASK approach may also be useful in your communication.

- Acknowledge any concerns brought forward
- Steer the conversation to refute the myths
- Knowledge- Provide accurate information and resources

12. Who should I contact if I have general questions about communicable disease management in First Nations Communities?

If you have questions or general CD related consults, please email cdmgmt@fnha.ca or call 1-844-364-2232 (toll-free, option 3).