

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

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Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2. Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses, including the flu and the common cold.

B.C.'s COVID-19 Immunization Plan

B.C.'s COVID-19 Immunization Plan is designed to save lives and stop the spread of COVID-19. To learn more about COVID-19 vaccines, including topics like the vaccine approval process and B.C.'s plan for vaccine distribution, see [HealthLink BC: COVID-19 immunization](#).

For information on COVID-19 and its treatment, call 1-888-COVID-19 (1-888-268-4319) or call **8-1-1** for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Symptoms

To learn about COVID-19 symptoms, what to do if you are feeling ill, and who may be at higher risk for complications, see:

- [BC Centre for Disease Control: If You Have COVID-19](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control: Symptoms](#)
- [HealthLink BC: Symptoms of COVID-19](#)

Self-isolation and COVID-19

Self-isolation means staying home and avoiding situations where you are in contact with others. It is an important measure used to stop the spread of illness. If you have COVID-19, you can manage your illness similar to how you manage other respiratory infections like influenza (flu). Stay home if you feel sick and take prevention measures to limit the spread of infection. There are a number of reasons why you should or may be required to self-isolate. For more information about self-isolation, visit:

- [BC Centre for Disease Control: Self-Isolation and Self-Monitoring](#)
- [Government of Canada: COVID-19: Prevention and risks](#)

Self-monitoring

Self-monitoring means paying close attention to how you feel. Everyone should routinely monitor for symptoms of COVID-19. Record your temperature if you feel chills or feverish. You may also need to help children or close contacts who are older or chronically ill to self-monitor.

Learn more about who needs to self-monitor at [BC Centre for Disease Control: Self-Isolation and Self-Monitoring](#).

Testing

A COVID-19 test is recommended when a positive or negative result will inform decisions about treatment or care. Testing is recommended for people with symptoms of COVID-19 and who are:

- Hospitalized
- Pregnant
- At risk of more severe disease and [currently eligible for treatment](#)

To learn more about testing, visit:

- [BC Centre for Disease Control: When to get a COVID-19 test](#)
- [HealthLink BC: Testing \(COVID\)](#)

Treatment

There are some specific treatments available for COVID-19. For more information, see [BC Centre for Disease Control: Treatments](#).

To find out if treatment may be right for you, visit the [Province of British Columbia: COVID-19 testing and treatments](#) page.

For additional information on COVID-19 treatments, visit:

- [BCCDC: Patient Information about Paxlovid](#)
- [BCCDC: Questions and Answers: Nirmatrelvir/ritonavir \(Paxlovid\)](#)
- [BCCDC: Patient Information about Remdesivir](#)
- [Province of British Columbia: Paxlovid for B.C. residents](#)

When seeing a health care provider, please tell them:

- Your symptoms
- Where you have been travelling or living
- If you had close or prolonged contact with a sick person, especially if they had a fever, cough or difficulty breathing

CanTreatCOVID study

The CanTreatCOVID study is open to adults in B.C. who:

- Tested positive for COVID-19 with symptoms starting within the last 5 days and
- Aged 18 to 49 years with chronic condition(s) or 50 years and older regardless of health status

Participants in the study may be eligible to receive COVID-19 medications (including Paxlovid).

Visit [CanTreatCOVID.org](#) or call [1-888-888-3308](#) for more information. The CanTreatCOVID study is supported by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Health Canada and Public Health Agency of Canada. A [CanTreatCOVID recruitment poster](#) is available for download to post in pharmacies or clinics.

Reduce your risk of infection

Learn more about how to [reduce your risk of infection](#).

Travel and COVID-19

For the latest travel advisory information, visit:

- [BC Centre for Disease Control: Travel](#)
- [Government of Canada: Travel advice and advisories by destination](#)

Long COVID

If you still have symptoms more than 3 months after your initial illness, you may be experiencing post COVID, or [long COVID](#). The [Provincial Health Services Authority: Post-COVID-19 Interdisciplinary Clinical Care Network](#) offers clinical care, education (online resources sheets and videos) and access to research opportunities to support your recovery.

Mental health

COVID-19 infection can bring up feelings of confusion, sadness and anxiety. These are normal feelings when faced with uncertainty and health challenges. It is important to take care of your mental health and be kind to yourself. Learn more about mental health and COVID-19:

- [BC Centre for Disease Control: Mental well-being during COVID-19](#)
- [Government of Canada: Taking Care of Your Mental Health](#)
- [HealthLink BC: Mental Health and COVID-19](#)

Children, youth and families

If you have COVID-19 and are pregnant or breastfeeding, you may have questions about your health and your baby's health. You may have additional concerns about parenting while your children are staying home sick. Learn more about [Children, youth and families during COVID-19](#).

Useful resources

For a list of trusted sources that HealthLink BC [8-1-1](#) uses to provide British Columbians with health information and advice, visit [useful resources for COVID-19](#).

For information and updates on COVID-19 in other languages, visit:

- [Province of British Columbia: COVID-19 guidance in B.C.](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control: Translated Content](#)

American Sign Language videos are also available.

If you have concerns or questions about your health, contact HealthLink BC ([8-1-1](#)) at any time or speak with your health care provider.

The information provided in the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Health Feature has been adapted from the [BC Centre for Disease Control: Testing for COVID-19](#), [BC Centre for Disease Control: Symptoms](#), [BC Centre for Disease Control: Masks](#), [BC Centre for Disease Control: Travel](#), [BC Centre for Disease Control: COVID-19 Vaccine](#), [Government of Canada: Travel, testing, quarantine and borders](#) pages, accessed May 2024.

For more HealthLinkBC File topics, visit www.HealthLinkBC.ca/more/resources/healthlink-bc-files or your local public health unit. For non-emergency health information and advice in B.C. visit www.HealthLinkBC.ca or call **8-1-1** (toll-free). For the deaf and hard of hearing, call **7-1-1**. Translation services are available in more than 130 languages on request.