

## Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a coronavirus. COVID-19 has spread worldwide, including to British Columbia, and has been declared a global pandemic.

### 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 [COVID-19 Immunization](#).

For non-health related COVID-19 information and services, call 1-888-COVID-19 (1-888-268-4319). Service is available 7:30 am to 8 pm.

### 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: Symptoms](#)
- [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 in stopping the spread of illness. If you have symptoms and tested positive for 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:

- [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, even mild ones. 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 and are self-monitoring.

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 (any age)
- pregnant
- at risk of more severe disease and [currently eligible for treatment](#)

To learn more about testing, see:

- [BC Centre for Disease Control: When to get a COVID-19 test](#)
- [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 [Government of British Columbia's COVID-19 Treatments](#) page.

Most people with COVID-19 will recover on their own. Go to the [BC Centre for Disease Control: If You Have COVID-19](#) page for more information about how to manage your symptoms when you have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

Doctors and nurse practitioners are available to provide in-person care during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some offices may offer telephone and video appointments as well. If you need care, please contact your health care provider. If you do not have a regular health care provider, you can use the [HealthLinkBC Directory](#) or call **8-1-1** to find a health care provider in your community.

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

For more information on what you can do if you have symptoms, see [Symptoms of COVID-19](#).

## Reduce Your Risk of Infection

We have many tools, such as vaccines, treatments and our own actions that can protect us from the impacts of COVID-19.

These tools will help everyone be safer from COVID-19 and other illnesses, and they are even more important if you are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

[Use this toolkit](#) to decide how and when to use these tools.

As social interactions continue in our community, you may also be concerned about socializing safely. Learn about safe socializing to reduce risk of COVID-19 exposure at [BC Centre for Disease Control: Safer Social Interactions](#).

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

## Travel and COVID-19

For the latest travel advisory information, see:

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

## Long COVID

If you still have symptoms more than three 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

The COVID-19 pandemic can bring up feelings of confusion, sadness and anxiety that are hard to manage. These are normal feelings when faced with uncertainty. It is more important than ever 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](#) (PDF 371KB)
- [Mental Health and COVID-19](#)

## Children, Youth and Families

Parenting during the pandemic can be challenging. If you 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. Learn more about [Children, Youth and Families During COVID-19](#).

## Medications

As the COVID-19 pandemic progresses, changes have been made to ways pharmacists can provide medications. This includes providing refills and emergency supplies of prescription

drugs. Pharmacists are not able to provide new medications without a prescription. To learn more about changes to pharmacy services visit, [College of Pharmacists of British Columbia: Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

## Useful Resources

There is a lot of information about COVID-19 and the province's response to the pandemic. For a list of trusted sources that HealthLink BC **8-1-1** uses to provide British Columbians with health information and advice, see [Useful Resources for COVID-19](#).

For information on COVID-19 in other languages, see:

- [Government of British Columbia: COVID-19 information in additional languages](#)
- [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.

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The information provided in the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Health Feature has been adapted from the [BC Centre for Disease Control: Testing](#), [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, and borders](#) and [Government of Canada: COVID-19 vaccinated travellers entering Canada](#) pages, accessed October 24, 2022.

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For more HealthLinkBC File topics, visit [www.HealthLinkBC.ca/more/resources/healthlink-bc-files](http://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](http://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.