



COMMUNITY UPDATE

The latest from Northern Health

December 15, 2021

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COVID-19

Looking for COVID-19 testing and self-isolation information? Here's where to go

With all the COVID-19 information available, it can be overwhelming to know where to find what you need. All Northern Health COVID-19 information is accessible from [one handy spot](#) from the homepage.

For those looking for information on testing, results, what to do if you test positive, and close contacts, the Northern Health [COVID-19 testing and self-isolation page](#) is the place to go!

COVID-19 testing information

If you're looking to book a test or find out how to get your test results, check out the [testing and results](#) section. Here you'll find links to:

- [Book a COVID-19 test with the online booking form](#)
- [Get guidance on what to do after your COVID-19 test](#)

If you have COVID-19

If you test positive, there are clear steps and a number of resources in the [I have COVID-19](#) section. For example, you'll find links to:

- [An infographic on what to expect](#) when public health calls
- [A guidance document for COVID-19 cases and their close contacts](#) that includes information on how to identify and notify your close contacts and what to do next.

If you're a close contact

If you've been told you're a close contact of someone who has COVID-19, then the [I am a close contact](#) section is for you. Here you'll find information on:

- What actions you need to take (see the table in this section)
- [Guidance for cases and contacts in the Northern Health region](#)

COVID-19 immunization plan**Pediatric dose**

The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is now available for children 5 to 11. This vaccine uses a lower dose (10 micrograms), at one-third of the dose formulated for older children and adults, which will provide effective protection tailored to children's immune systems. The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) advises that children receive a two-dose series of the vaccine with an interval of eight weeks or more between the first and second dose.

For more information about this vaccine (including information about the vaccine and how to register a youth), please see [COVID-19 vaccines for children 5 to 11](#).

Third dose

The third dose of the COVID-19 vaccination is for some people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised. People who need a third dose [will be contacted](#) by the provincial [Get Vaccinated](#) system.

Third dose immunizations will be by appointment only, they are not available for walk-ins.

Booster dose

The booster dose is an additional non-urgent, non-compulsory vaccine that gets immunity back up to a desirable level of protection for an extended period of time. It will be available starting in January 2022.

To book a booster dose, please ensure you're registered in the [Get Vaccinated](#) system. If you have difficulty accessing online booking, please call 1-833-838-2323.

Booster dose shots will be by appointment only, they are not available for walk-ins.

COVID-19 orders**NH regional Public Health Orders revised; worship services allowed with vaccination**

Northern Health (NH) is updating public health orders for Gatherings and Events, to align with Provincial Health Officer Orders, and to allow worship services with COVID-19 safety requirements in place, including vaccination.

The regional public health orders covering all of the NH region are in response to sustained rates of COVID-19 activity and the impact on health care resources.

The revised NH Gatherings and Events COVID-19 Order takes effect at midnight, December 10, 2021, and will be in place until at least January 31, 2022, while NH and provincial public

health officials continue to evaluate levels of COVID-19 activity and ongoing impacts on the health care system, individuals, and communities.

Under the recent changes, faith-based organizations will be allowed to resume in-person worship services, **as long as they are limited to 50% capacity in the place of worship and all participants over the age of 11 are vaccinated.** Virtual or drive-in services can be held without a check of vaccination status.

The revised order also removes proof of vaccination requirements for outside events, in line with provincial measures.

General information

For information about current Provincial orders (such as the acute- and long-term care visitors policy, and restrictions around gatherings and events), please see:

- [NH Orders and FAQ resources](#)
- [NH Public Health COVID-19 Order Enforcement Actions](#)
- [Provincial and regional restrictions](#)

For complaints or concern related to orders, please call [250-565-7322](tel:250-565-7322) or email php@northernhealth.ca.

Please note that changes to the orders reflect the ongoing risk of COVID-19, rates of transmission, and the impact they continue to have on health care resources.

Northern BC community immunization coverage

Immunization coverage for every community in Northern Health is available for you on the [Northern BC community immunization coverage page](#). This link includes both first and second dose counts and percentages per community and is updated every week.

*Please note that Children Age 5-11 has been added into this report. We will be able to note the weekly change beginning next week.

Community Toolkit

To empower local partners to share helpful information, we have created a [COVID-19 Community Toolkit](#) - a digital resource for community partners, which includes vaccine clinic information (including [clinic schedules](#)), a community guide, trusted information and links, and more!

BC vaccination coverage rates and COVID-19 activity

BCCDC COVID-19 dashboard

Visit the BCCDC [COVID-19 surveillance dashboard](#) for information by local health area (LHA) and community health service area (CHSA).

COVID-19 Numbers

As of December 14, **18,089** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **213**
- New cases: **34**
- Currently in hospital: **15**
 - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **8**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **266**

For the latest provincial numbers, see the [BC COVID-19 dashboard](#), which is updated Monday-Friday. The dashboard may not work in all browsers; Chrome is suggested.

As well, for a visual comparison of COVID-19 cases in BC by HSDA to other Canadian and global jurisdictions, see the [COVID-19 Epidemiology app](#). It's updated on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

- [BC COVID-19 pandemic update](#) – December 14, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – December 9, 2021

Trusted links and resources for COVID-19

- [Northern Health online booking form - COVID-19 test](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [HealthLink BC COVID-19 page](#)
- [WHO FAQ](#)
- [Health Canada FAQ](#)
- [COVID-19 content in other languages](#)
- WorkSafe BC - [COVID-19 information and resources](#)
- Northern Health Virtual Primary and Community Care Clinic: **1-844-645-7811**
- Northern Health Environmental Health Officer Line: **1-250-565-7322**
- Non-medical info: call 1-888-COVID19 / 1-888-268-4319 7 days, 7:30 am - 8 pm

For current information on restrictions on travel, gatherings and other issues, see the [Provincial Health Officer's COVID-19 webpage](#).

Overdose prevention and response

BC Coroner Report updated: January – October 2021, and record number of naloxone kits ordered

BC's Coroners Service updated 2021 illicit drug toxicity deaths to include October 2021

- 201 suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths in October 2021, the highest number recorded in a month
- Total of 1,782 suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths between January and October 2021, the highest ever recorded in a calendar year
- Fentanyl or its analogues detected in 84 per cent of all illicit drug toxicity deaths, with a greater number of cases with extreme fentanyl concentrations
- No deaths reported at supervised consumption or overdose prevention sites

- No indication that prescribed safe supply is contributing to illicit drug deaths
- Read the full report [here](#)
- Read about types of drugs detected [here](#)

October 2021 - A record number of Take Home Naloxone (THN) kits (over 43,500) were shipped by Toward the Heart

- 94,522 naloxone kits were reported as used to reverse an overdose since August 2012
- Over half of kits distributed were reported as replacements for a used kit
- 83 per cent of people who received kits were people who used substances
- This highlights that people with lived and living experience are the ones getting kits and using them to save the lives of their friends and community members

Organizational news

12 Things to Know this Holiday Season

We know the past two years have been really hard. Thank you for getting vaccinated against COVID-19 – you're doing your part to help keep yourself, your family and your community safe and protected.

We are counting down some of the top twelve things to know to have a safe, healthy holiday season.

- [Day one – it's been a hard year](#)
- [Day two – merry and masked](#)
- [Day three – communities with immunity](#)

[Follow along](#) for the next 11 days for more tips and reminders for enjoying your holidays, while staying safe and healthy!