



COMMUNITY UPDATE

The latest from Northern Health

February 2, 2022

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COVID-19

COVID-19 testing and self-isolation

As COVID-19 activity increases across BC, guidance for [when to get a COVID-19 test](#) has been updated.

A COVID-19 test is not recommended if:

- You have no symptoms, even if you are a close contact of someone who has tested positive
- You are fully vaccinated (two doses), experiencing mild symptoms and can manage your illness at home. Self-isolate for five days. Notify your close contacts so they can self-monitor for symptoms

A COVID-19 test is recommended if:

- You have symptoms, and:
 - You are at higher risk of severe illness
 - You identify with a high-risk setting - such as health care workers, first responders, residents of congregate settings, or live in a remote or rural community

For more information, including how to get a test, and information about rapid test use, please see the [Northern Health Stories site](#).

Access/assessment for the rapid tests is only available through the following options:

- A requisition sent from a primary care provider

- Calling the NH Virtual Clinic at 1-844-645-7811
- Completion of the NH COVID-19 Test Booking

Note: Patients with mild symptoms will be asked to stay home and self-isolate, and will not be provided with a rapid test based on their symptoms and risk factors.

Patients who require testing (dependant on symptoms and risk factors) will be referred to a test site for a PCR test or to pick up a take-home rapid test. Most tests will be PCR. A friend, family member, etc. may pick up the take-home rapid test on the patient's behalf. Availability of rapid tests may be limited at times, depending on supply.

Get your booster (if eligible):

Boosters are the health care system's best defense against COVID-19 because the vaccine becomes less effective over time. The booster returns, and even improves, vaccine effectiveness from shortly after when you received Dose 2. Boosters help protect our seniors, who are most likely to experience severe illness and hospitalization as a result of COVID-19 infection. **Regardless of the setting, if or when you are eligible (6 months after Dose 2), please [book your booster](#) immediately.** For more information on Omicron and the importance of getting booster dose, check out "[Omicron Wave COVID-19](#)", a presentation by Medial Health Officer Dr. Corneil.

COVID-19 treatments in BC

Northern Health is in the process of rolling out anti-viral COVID-19 treatments for high-risk groups. Therapeutic treatments for COVID-19 have been approved for use outside BC hospitals. These treatments do not stop you from getting COVID-19. They are used to prevent severe illness in people who are at higher risk from COVID-19. To be effective, they must be taken within five to seven days of developing symptoms.

Visit the [Government of BC](#) and [British Columbia Centre for Disease Control \(BCCDC\)](#) websites for more information about COVID-19 treatments.

Proof of vaccination

By order of the Provincial Health Officer, proof of full vaccination is required to access some events, services and businesses in BC. This requirement has been extended until June 30, 2022.

Proof of vaccination requirements apply to all people born in 2010 or earlier (12+) and covers access to many events and places, such as concerts, restaurants, swimming pools, indoor tickets sporting events, and others. Detailed information can be found on the [Province of BC website](#).

Youth aged 12 to 18

Youth aged 12 to 18 can carry their own BC Vaccine Card, or have a trusted adult carry it for them. Youth are not required to show valid government photo ID.

- 12 year olds only need to show proof of 1 dose of vaccine
- 13 to 18 year olds need to show proof of 2 doses of vaccine

Children aged 5 to 11

Children aged 5 to 11 are not required to show proof of vaccination.

COVID-19 vaccine

Please visit the [BCCDC COVID-19 vaccine website](#) for information about: vaccine doses (first, second, third, booster, and pediatric), vaccine registration and eligibility, vaccines and children, getting a vaccine, vaccine safety, vaccine considerations (including pregnancy), proof of vaccination, and more.

Please note that vaccination doses may be by appointment only, not walk-ins. Please see the [Northern Health COVID-19 immunization clinic page](#) for more information for your community.

Northern BC community immunization coverage

Immunization coverage for every community in Northern Health is available for you on the [Northern BC community immunization coverage update \(PDF\)](#). This link includes both first- and second-dose counts and percentages per community. It's updated every 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 February 1, **24, 998** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **1,167**
- New cases: **171**
- Currently in hospital: **30**
 - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **8**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **284**

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](#) – February 1, 2022

- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – January 2, 2022

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

Not Just Naloxone (NJN) course for nurses offered free from the First Nations Health Authority: March 2, 2022

The First Nations Health Authority is offering a free virtual workshop for Nurses called Not Just Naloxone workshop for Nurses: Talking about substance use in Indigenous communities. This course runs **March 2, 2022**.

This training was developed in response to the toxic drug crisis, which continues to disproportionately impact Indigenous people. Please see the poster attached to the digest email for more information.

To register, visit [NJN for Nurses](#) or email njn@fnha.ca

Organizational news

February is Therapeutic Recreation month

February marks Therapeutic Recreation month in Canada. Therapeutic recreation, also called recreational therapy, helps people to stay involved in healthy habits and activities. [The Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association](#) says that by using recreation, leisure, and play as tools, clients can achieve their highest level of independence and quality of life.

To continue to read about the creative, meaningful therapeutic recreation activities brought to community members, please read the rest of this article on the [Northern Health Stories page](#).