

PRESS RELEASE

From the Campbell River and District Division of Family Practice

COVID 19 – Updates and Actions

March 20, 2020

The Campbell River and District Division of Family Practice is working with their Island Health and community partners, including long term care facilities, to ensure that up to date and accurate information is available to the public.

As you know, there are confirmed cases of COVID-19 on Vancouver Island. Currently, all of those identified cases are experiencing mild symptoms and being managed through self-isolation.

We understand many people have expressed frustration that the Provincial Health Officer and Island Health have not provided specific locations of confirmed cases. As Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry has stated on several occasions, they will not be identifying the specific location of confirmed cases unless public health providers can be certain they have reached all those who need to be contacted. As Dr. Henry also stated, while it is important to protect the privacy of those infected to ensure people are confident to receive medical care if they have symptoms, **it is even more imperative that everyone is aware that the risk of COVID-19 is not just in one place. It is in your community too and we need every one to be taking measures to prevent transmission.**

Most medical clinics are supporting the recommendation for **social distancing** and accommodating those who are **self isolating** by offering telephone and virtual care options for patients. Others are limiting the number of patients entering the clinic at any given time. If you need to see your family doctor, nurse practitioner or a walk-in clinic, please phone the clinic ahead and discuss options.

Hospitals have imposed visitor restrictions and other measures that are vital to the containment of the virus, the preparation for those who may need urgent care, and the health and safety of all.

Trusted Information Sources

The British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) is the recommended resource for provincial information that is accurate and current: [http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/coronavirus-\(novel\)](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/coronavirus-(novel)) . Information, including number of cases on the island, is being updated frequently on the site at this time and individuals are encouraged to check back regularly (e.g. daily).

The BCCDC has resources on proper hand washing, preventative measures everyone should be taking advice on social distancing and direction on who should be self-isolating.

Below are other websites that are reliable and up to date

- Island Health: <https://www.islandhealth.ca/learn-about-health/diseases-conditions/novel-coronavirus-information>

- Outbreak update: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novelcoronavirus-infection.html>
- First Nations Health Authority: <https://www.fnha.ca/about/news-and-events/news/information-on-novel-coronavirus>
- National coronavirus info line 1-833-784-4397

Who Should be Tested for COVID 19?

Testing is available for all who need it but not everyone requires a test. If you develop symptoms, use the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to help determine if you need further assessment or testing for COVID-19. You can complete this assessment for yourself or on behalf of someone else if they are unable to. While screening clinics are opening in many communities around Vancouver Island including Campbell River, it is important to understand this resource is being prioritized for the populations outlined below.

Who should be tested for COVID-19?

People **with respiratory symptoms** who are:

- Hospitalized, or likely to be hospitalized
- Health Care Workers
- Residents of long term care facilities
- Part of an investigation of a cluster or outbreak

Who does not need to be tested for COVID-19?

- People without symptoms
- Patients with mild respiratory symptoms who can be managed at home, including returning travellers with an onset of illness within 14 days of return to Canada

The BC Ministry of Health strongly urges anyone who has symptoms - including a fever, cough, sneezing, sore throat, or difficulty breathing - to self-isolate for 14 days. To protect yourself while out in public, wash your hands frequently and maintain a distance of about 2 metres from others.

PLEASE do not go to the Emergency Room for testing. You should only go to the Emergency Room if you are experiencing a medical emergency. If you require immediate medical care, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room.

Who Should Self-isolate?

Self-isolation is a critical step that you must take to limit the spread of infection in the community. Anyone who is returning from travel outside of Canada **must** self-isolate for 14 days. Essential health

Care workers returning from travel outside of Canada are asked to contact their place of work or family doctor for direction. Anyone who is sick or experiencing symptoms should stay home.

If you develop cough, congestion, or fever, YOU MUST SELF-ISOLATE until symptoms resolve. If you are unsure, in the current situation, we ask that you assume that you have contracted the COVID-19 infection and self-isolate. **This is no reason to panic and immediately seek medical attention. A positive test does not change the treatment of a COVID-19 infection. Most infected people will only develop a mild respiratory infection and will recover within 2 weeks.**

If you become more unwell or are still unclear on how to proceed, then this is the time to contact 8-1-1 your family doctor or other primary care provider.

Taking Care of Yourself

We do not know how long these protective measures will be in place. Please ensure you get time away from worrying about COVID-19 - for example spend time alone or family away from others in the beautiful environment we live in. Most of us will be fine through this difficult time, more of us will be fine if we stick together, act responsibly, and be kind and respectful to those working hard to keep our community safe.

Take the time to eat healthily, exercise, and find new ways to relax. You can find some tips/techniques for relaxation through this link to the "Coronavirus Sanity Guide" This page is accessible to anyone for free from the Ten Percent Happier website: <https://www.tenpercent.com/coronavirussanityguide>

The Campbell River & District Division of Family Practice, Island Health, and their partners will continue to work diligently on planning and preparedness to ensure that should things escalate, those affected will be well cared for. If we can all do our part in conveying the most up to date and reliable information and guidance to help folks feel informed and remain calm and safe. Our Facebook, FETCH and web sites are being kept updated daily and are a quick source for information.

Find us on 

www.campbellriver.fetchbc.ca

www.divisionsbc.ca/campbell-river-district

Yours in wellness,

Board of Directors - Campbell River & District Division of Family Practice