

COVID-19 Update

For more information:
Canada.ca/coronavirus

Information for Indigenous communities:
Canada.ca/coronavirus-info-indigenous



INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA – Ontario Region – May 19, 2022

Getting vaccinated after COVID-19 infection

COVID-19 re-infections can happen, which is why it is still important to stay up-to-date with vaccinations, even after infection. However, to ensure that individuals receive the maximum benefit from being vaccinated after having COVID-19, it is not recommended to be vaccinated immediately following infection.

The [latest provincial guidance](#) recommends that individuals who are eligible to be vaccinated, who are either partially vaccinated or unvaccinated and have had a COVID-19 infection, receive a COVID-19 vaccine at least 8 weeks after the infection.

For individuals who have received 2 doses of the vaccine and who get COVID-19, the province recommends waiting at least 3 months after their COVID-19 infection before getting their third or fourth dose. For youth 12-17 years of age, it is recommended that the post-infection vaccination occurs at least 6 months from their last dose of vaccine.

For advice on when it is best to receive a COVID-19 vaccine after infection, individuals should speak with their health care provider or local health unit, as personal health circumstances may affect the timing of post-infection COVID-19 vaccination.

Promoting a safe summer

With the warmer weather upon us, your community may be planning a pow wow or other summer gatherings. COVID-19 remains a threat to community health, so it is important to continue to encourage best practices to limit its spread. In the next few weeks, we will share information and tools to help you promote a safe summer in your community. We know how eager everyone is to get back to the activities that we love. We are committed to helping you protect your community through the summer gathering season.



Evusheld and COVID-19 prevention

Health Canada [recently](#) authorized the use of the drug Evusheld to prevent COVID-19 in adults and adolescents who have a compromised immune system and may not mount a good response to COVID-19 vaccine and/or cannot be receive the recommended COVID-19 vaccinations. Given by injection, [Evusheld](#) is made up of set of antibodies that are designed to prevent the SARS-CoV-2 infection. Evusheld does not take the place of vaccination for people eligible for vaccines. Being up-to-date on vaccination (3 doses in adults and 4 doses in the vulnerable) remains the most effective way to help us get back to a normal way of life. ISC recommends that potential candidates speak to their health care provider to see if Evusheld is suitable for them.

New COVID-19 Communications Resources Portal

The ISC Ontario Communications team has redeveloped the [OneHealth.ca Portal](#) with input from NAN, SLFHNA and WAHA to make it easier to find what you are looking for. COVID-19 communications resources on the Portal are now organized by theme, such as public health measures and vaccines. These subsections can be accessed via links at the bottom of the Home page.

As measures and seasons shift, other health-related information will also be included on the Portal. For example, on the current [Vaccines](#) page, there is information about influenza vaccines as well. New resources will be highlighted on the Portal's homepage as they become available. After two weeks, they will be moved under the relevant tab. Check back often for new resources!

COVID-19 Cases

*As of May 13, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. EST

- **17,917** confirmed in-community
- **409** active cases on reserve
- **66** deaths
- **17,442** resolved (97.3%)

COVID-19 Vaccines for Ontario

*All data reflects totals from 8 p.m. on May 17, 2022

- **27,019** Daily doses administered
- **33,151,398** Total doses administered
- **12,189,111** People fully vaccinated

For the most up-to-date national information on COVID-19, visit the [Indigenous Services Canada](#) website or the Government of Canada's Twitter and Facebook pages at @GCIndigenous and @GCIndigenousHealth.

Other Updates

Funding available: Pathways to Safe Indigenous Communities Initiative

The [Pathways to Safe Indigenous Communities Initiative](#) is now open to applicants for 2022-23. The initiative commits \$103.8 million over five years to assist with the implementation of Indigenous-designed projects that support and improve community safety and wellbeing. This year, \$15.7 million is available for organizations and communities nationwide.

This fund aims to help to address missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people as part of the [Federal Pathway](#). It supports Call for Justice 5.4 by providing support for the self-determination of Indigenous communities to design community safety and wellbeing interventions that suit their needs. Enforcement activities or policing bodies and organizations will not be funded.

Eligible activities aim to advance approaches to community safety and wellbeing that support Indigenous-designed interventions and Indigenous definitions of safe, secure and resilient communities.

There is no deadline to apply for this funding as the program will be accepting proposals on an ongoing basis throughout the year. More information on the initiative and how to apply can be found [here](#). Should you have any further questions, please contact the following email: vcas-psic@sac-isc.gc.ca.

New Joint Command Structure for emergencies

Beginning in 2022, ISC introduced a new 'Joint Command' approach to emergency events, with Indigenous partners, as full and equal participants, with the province of Ontario and Canada, which means:

- once ISC is alerted to an incident or emergency event, a 'Joint Command' call of the three partners is convened to assess risk; make informed decisions on evacuation timing and destinations, and provide approvals so that partners can implement a rapid response;
- partners then mobilize efforts within their respective jurisdictions and responsibilities and, at the request of the Indigenous partner, the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC) convenes regular update calls to inform and exchange information with all responders.

Increased syphilis activity in the region

The number of syphilis cases in Ontario has been growing steadily since 2019, with incidence of syphilis in Ontario First Nations at least four times higher than the rest of the province. Without strong partnership between community leadership, health partners and ISC, syphilis may soon become a major crisis in Ontario communities.

Syphilis is a bacterial infection spread by sexual contact. The disease starts as a painless sore that may not be noticed. Typical locations include the genitals, rectum or mouth. Syphilis spreads from person to person through contact with these sores. Syphilis is easy to treat with antibiotics. However, if left untreated, syphilis can have serious health consequences, including stroke, hearing or vision loss, and meningitis.

This year in Ontario, there are already almost double the number of syphilis cases as in 2021, including at least one case of congenital syphilis, meaning a mother passed on the disease to an unborn fetus.

The participation of community leaders is essential to design the best customized response for each individual community.

As more cases are reported in Ontario First Nations, community leadership will be contacted privately by the Regional Medical Officer to initiate outbreak response meetings. ISC will request that community leadership co-chair the outbreak response to maximize its positive impact on the community's health.

Ornge and Nishnawbe Aski Nation win award for Operation Remote Immunity

Congratulations to Ornge and Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) on winning an [International Association of Business Communicators](#) OVATION Award of Excellence! This award acknowledges the incredible work they did to manage communications for Operation Remote Immunity (ORI). Throughout 2020 and 2021, ORI was a multi-partner operation that helped to deliver and administer thousands of COVID-19 vaccines to remote and isolated First Nations communities in Ontario. Thank you Ornge and NAN for helping to make it a success!

Help is available whenever you need it.

Immediate support is available 24/7
for all Indigenous people in Canada.

Hope for Wellness Help Line and Chat
1-855-242-3310 or www.hopeforwellness.ca

Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line
1-866-925-4419

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women
and Girls Support Line
1-844-413-6649



Please feel free to contact the FNIHB Ontario COVID-19 generic inbox: sac.covid-19fnihbontario.isc@canada.ca
if you or your community members have any information needs.