

# Ontario Region Update

Information on COVID-19:  
[Canada.ca/coronavirus](https://Canada.ca/coronavirus)

Information for Indigenous communities on  
COVID-19: [www.sac-isc.gc.ca](https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca)



## INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA – December 1, 2022

### Testing and Treating Respiratory Infections

In most cases, people can safely manage a respiratory infection at home by resting and taking care of themselves. However, multiple populations are at a higher risk of developing severe outcomes when infected with COVID-19, the flu or Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) they cannot manage on their own. For example, children under five years old are much more likely to experience serious RSV infections in comparison to adults.

Testing remain important tools in identifying and treating cases of respiratory illnesses in high-risk communities. Quick identification gives communities and local health practitioners the opportunity to make treatment decisions and take public health action.

Rapid antigen tests (RATs) for [COVID-19](#) are still recommended for at-home use. Click [here for a list of locations](#) providing free tests for individuals in Ontario. Organizations serving First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities can continue to request tests from the province via the [Screening Portal](#). If Ontario is unable to complete requested, Indigenous Services Canada can provide [RATs](#). Many communities also have access to molecular point-of-care testing devices, which can test for COVID-19, flu and RSV at the same time using one swab.

Ontario provides antiviral treatment for eligible individuals who are at risk of serious outcomes from COVID-19 or the flu (e.g., young children, elders, individuals with pre-existing health conditions). These antivirals are most helpful when given within the first few days of symptoms, which is why it is important for individuals who are high-risk and symptomatic to get tested. For eligibility guidance, individuals can consult their local health authority, nursing practitioner, or visit the online screening tools: [COVID-19 Antiviral Tool](#) and [Antiviral Medications for Seasonal Influenza](#). Ontario also has an [RSV prophylaxis program](#) for the drug palivizumab for high-risk (e.g., premature babies, congenital anomalies, etc.) eligible infants under the age of two, to prevent serious RSV infection. Guardians are encouraged to review eligibility guidance [here](#) and discuss the program with their child's healthcare provider.

### Ontario FN/I/M COVID-19 Cases

\*Week of November 20-26, 2022

- **157** active cases on reserve
- **23.5%** decrease in cases during this week
- **0** new deaths
- **3** hospitalizations, including **1 ICU** admission

### Protecting Community Members from Respiratory Infections

Ontarians are experiencing a triple threat of respiratory illnesses; the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the flu, and [Respiratory Syncytial Virus](#) (RSV). To protect everyone, it remains important to follow public health advice and guidance. This is especially true for high-risk individuals including seniors, those with pre-existing health conditions, and children.

To limit spread of respiratory infections and serious illness, Ontario recommends continuing to apply the layers of protection proven to keep the most vulnerable healthy:

- Adults receive regularly scheduled vaccinations, including [COVID-19 boosters](#)
- Children receive all recommended childhood vaccinations, including those missed due to the pandemic
- Wearing a well-fitting mask in indoor public settings
- Washing hands frequently and cleaning high-touch surfaces regularly
- [Monitoring](#) household members for symptoms
- Staying home when sick

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples can receive regular vaccinations at any participating pharmacy, or at any available [Indigenous-led clinic](#), local health provider or nursing station.

If serious symptoms develop during a respiratory infection, high-risk individuals should be taken to an emergency medicine practitioner immediately. For parents interested in learning more about how to care for children with respiratory infection symptoms, the Ontario College of Family Physicians provides helpful tips: [Actions Parents Can Take](#).

Applying multiple layers of protection helps to protect ourselves, our families, and our children. For more information about respiratory infections, please visit [Canada.ca](#) and the [Canadian Lung Association](#).

### Ontario COVID-19 Vaccines

\*As of November 20, 2022

- **80.7%** completed a primary series
- **50.4%** received a primary series and 1 booster dose
- **20.8%** received a primary series and 2 booster doses

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 @GCIIndigenous and @GCIIndigenousHealth.



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## Other Updates

### Online Questionnaire

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ontario Communications Team of Indigenous Services Canada has provided regular updates and resources—including this document. While the Ontario Region Update began as a source on the latest COVID-19 resources and news impacting Indigenous communities, it has since expanded to other topics and services. This has also been the case for the [OneHealth.ca Portal](#), where resources for other health issues like RSV, the flu, and mental healthcare will be housed moving forward.

To better understand the usefulness, quality, and accessibility of the team's products and resources, we have created a brief, multiple choice questionnaire. It will be open for submissions until January 31, 2023, and it is anonymous, though participants may choose to self-identify. There is also space to provide written feedback. The questionnaire is intended for all recipients of the Ontario Region Update, and all participants of the regular Ontario Region Chiefs Update (Chiefs Call).

Your feedback is invaluable and greatly appreciated. We hope to gain a better understanding of which resources are helpful, and which may not be. Thank you for your support in this task and your feedback over the last two years. [Click here to access the online questionnaire.](#)

### New Indigenous Dental Association of Canada

Indigenous dental professionals will soon have a platform through which they can network with colleagues and contribute to improving the delivery of oral health services in communities across Canada. The newly established Indigenous Dental Association of Canada brings together the Indigenous dental community to support reconciliation and improve oral health in their communities.

Through its Indigenous Oral Health Knowledge Transfer Project, the [Indigenous Dental Association of Canada](#) aims to create tools and resources for communities to improve oral health. This includes a multimedia project intended to raise awareness about oral health care and services in Indigenous communities.

The project will also seek to bridge cultural understanding and combat racial biases in receiving oral health care. [Indigenous Services Canada \(ISC\) will be providing funding support to the Indigenous Dental Association of Canada](#), with just over \$1 million dispensed over the next two years. ISC looks forward to working with the association to reach their shared goals of improving access to equitable oral health care.

### Ending Gender-Based Violence 2022

**Warning:** *The following contains information about violence against women, girls, gender- and sexually-diverse peoples. Please prioritize your well-being before proceeding.*

This week marks the annual [16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence](#). From November 25 to December 10, 2022, everyone is encouraged to explore ways in which they can oppose [gender-based violence](#) (GBV) and support change in their communities. GBV is any harmful act perpetrated against someone because of their gender, gender expression or perceived gender. It takes many forms, including:

- Physical harm
- Harassment
- Financial exploitation and control
- Bigoted media messages towards women, Two-Spirit people, transgender and non-binary people, and other gender and sexually-diverse people
- Intentionally using the wrong pronoun when addressing a Two-Spirit, transgender or non-binary person

GBV disproportionately affects [First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women](#) and [2SLGBTQI+ people](#), who are often targeted due to their race, sexuality, and/or gender. There are a number of ways we can oppose GBV. We can learn more about [ending GBV](#), including important issues like [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people](#); show support to external calls to action, like wearing a white ribbon on December 6; and provide loved ones with resources and support.

If someone is affected by GBV and needs resources, many local nursing stations, anti-violence and women's centres provide access to supportive care. Women and Gender Equality Canada has compiled a list of similar [additional support services](#). Indigenous peoples can also reach out to the [Hope for Wellness Help Line](#) for immediate help.

## 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](http://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](mailto:sac.covid-19fnihbontario.isc@canada.ca) if you or your community members have any information needs.