

ONTARIO REGION UPDATE



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Protect against measles: information and resources

National Immunization Awareness Week (NIAW), taking place from April 22-30, reminds us of the importance of routine vaccinations. As [measles cases continues to increase around the world](#), we encourage you to use NIAW to share information with your community about measles, its risks, and vaccination. About 90% of people who are not immune will get the measles if they are exposed to it. Up to 20% of those who get sick will be hospitalized.

A package of measles-related communications resources will be shared in the coming days. Similar information is outlined below, which you can use to make your own social media posts or other resources.

What is measles?

Measles is an [extremely contagious](#) and serious respiratory illness. The virus that causes measles can survive in the air for up to 2 hours. This means that if an infected person was in a room within the last two hours, it is possible to contract measles even after they've left. It can take 7 to 21 days to develop symptoms after being exposed to measles.

Is measles really dangerous?

Yes, because we do not have herd immunity in Ontario. Measles carries serious risks for those who cannot be vaccinated, like young babies and pregnant people. It can also be dangerous for children, who do not have mature immune systems, and who may have fallen behind on routine vaccinations as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Measles can cause complications including pneumonia, blindness, brain inflammation, premature labour, low birth weight, and death.

How can I protect myself and my community?

Catch up on any routine vaccinations you and your family have missed, including the measles vaccine. Vaccination is the best way to avoid serious outcomes from measles and helps to lower your chance of infecting others in your community. Talk to your local public health unit or health care provider if you don't know your vaccination status. To learn more about vaccine safety and vaccine-preventable diseases, please visit [protect your child with routine vaccination](#).

Is the vaccine safe?

Yes. The measles vaccine has been safely given for decades and most people get life-long protection after they complete a full schedule (or "series") of measles vaccines. Individuals born before 1970 are thought to be naturally immune.

How will I know if I have measles?

Infected individuals may develop the tell-tale measles sign: a non-itchy rash about 3 to 7 days after other symptoms begin, starting on the face. Other common symptoms include fever; cough; runny nose; red, watery eyes; sleepiness; and irritability. If you have symptoms or think you may have been exposed to measles, stay home and call your health care provider for instructions on what to do.



April 8: Safely watch the solar eclipse



Credit: Canadian Space Agency

On April 8, people living in parts of Southern Ontario will be able to see a rare and spectacular total solar eclipse. Afternoon sunlight will disappear for a few minutes as the Moon aligns perfectly between the Earth and the Sun, hiding the Sun's light. People living outside of the "[path of totality](#)" will be able to see a partial solar eclipse. How much of the Sun will be covered depends on where you live.

No matter how much of the eclipse you can see, **it is very important not to look at the Sun without proper eye protection. Regular sunglasses are not appropriate.**

[Visit the Canadian Space Agency's website](#) for information about [how to safely watch the eclipse](#) and resources that you can share with your community. [A toolkit for educators and youth](#) is also available.

People living across Turtle Island will not be able to view another total solar eclipse until 2044. We wish you a safe and exciting experience watching this rare event with your community!

Help is here whenever you need it

Support is available 24/7 for all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Please find a list of mental health helplines below, able to provide culturally relevant support. To find more services and resources, [click here to go to the Indigenous mental health page](#).



Hope for Wellness Helpline

Phone: 1-855-242-3310

Online chat: www.hopeforwellness.ca

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Support Line

Phone: 1-844-413-6649

Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line

Phone: 1-866-925-4419

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Services

Phone: 9-8-8 (call or text)



Deadline extended: 2024 National First Nations Water Leadership Award

There is still time to nominate someone from your community or organization for a National First Nations Water Leadership Award! **The nomination period for the 2024 award has been extended to April 30, 2024.** Please visit the [National First Nations Water Leadership Award website](#) for more information about award eligibility and criteria. To submit a nomination, please fill out this [online submission form](#) or send an email to prixdeau-wateraward@sac-isc.gc.ca to request a PDF version.



Funding and other opportunities: new and upcoming deadlines

Click the links below for more information about these opportunities.

- [Environment and Climate Change Youth Council](#). Deadline to apply: April 26, 2024
- ***New*** [Sustainable Jobs Training Fund](#). Deadline to apply: May 15, 2024 at 3:00 pm EDT
- ***New*** [Indigenous Leadership Fund](#). Deadline to apply: March 31, 2027

Preparing for seasonal flooding and wildfires



After an unprecedented number of wildfires in 2023, we expect 2024 will be another challenging season due to the effects of climate change. Indigenous Services Canada officials are preparing to support you through the upcoming wildfire and flooding season.

We want to thank you for participating in the Emergency Management Multilateral Roundtable that took place on March 14 with Chiefs and partners, including the Province of Ontario. Your feedback is critical to helping us plan the work ahead. We know you are concerned about how this emergency season will impact your communities and we will continue to meet and prepare with you. We are here to support you, and the safety of your community members is our top priority.

We will continue to share resources and information as this emergency season unfolds. An upcoming all Chiefs call in April will focus on wildfire response. For questions about how ISC can support you during wildfire and flooding season, please contact Sunil Bajaj (sunil.bajaj@sac-isc.gc.ca). You can also visit our website for more information about [wildfire evacuation](#) and [flooding in First Nations](#).

Cyber security: tips to protect yourself online

Online safety is an important part of personal security. Below are bullets and educational resources that can be used to talk about online safety and cyber security with your community members on the radio, at a town hall, or on social media. Some of the educational materials are available in Indigenous languages. Examples are provided below.

Example speaking points / social media posts

Don't give out information on unsolicited calls

- Be wary of unsolicited calls and texts from numbers you do not recognize. Fraudsters mislead by pretending to be legitimate people, companies, or organizations. This is sometimes referred to as “[spoofing](#)”.
- Some scammers will use urgent pleas to play on your emotions, or try to pressure you. It's okay to just hang up, or request the information in writing before returning any information in return.

Know who you're dealing with

- Most government and legal organizations will not call you and make demands. Scammers will use real company names to make their requests seem authentic.
- Make sure you inspect any unexpected bills thoroughly before you make a payment. If it is still not clear whether the bill is real or not, reach out to the company or individual directly to double check. If it's legitimate, they can confirm it.

Protect your online accounts

- Create [strong passwords](#) and keep them secure.
- Enable [multi-factor authentication](#). Resource also available in [Ojibwe](#), [Inuktitut](#), and [Cree](#).
- Only log into your accounts from trusted sources.

Educational resources

Communications Security Establishment: “Get Cyber Safe” text and posters

- [Bank on cyber security](#)
- [What's In Your Cybersecurity Backpack](#)
- [The 7 red flags of phishing](#). Resource also available in [Ojibwe](#), [Inuktitut](#), and [Cree](#).

Communications Security Establishment: “Get Cyber Safe” videos

- [Phishing Shanty \(Ruin a Cyber Criminal's Day\)](#)
- [Create a strong password](#)
- [Life Happens Online: Staying in touch](#)

Canadian Centre for Cyber Security

- [Cyber security at home and in the office](#)

Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre

- [Protect yourself from scams and fraud](#)



Little Native Hockey League celebrates 50 years!



The Little Native Hockey League – also known as the Little NHL – celebrated its 50th year in 2024, marking a significant milestone. This year, more than 245 teams and 4,000 tyke- to midget-aged players competed over March break in Markham, including the highest number of female skaters in the Little NHL’s history. It remains the largest annual ice hockey tournament for First Nation youth in Ontario.

The Little NHL continues to be an important event for nurturing self-esteem, sportsmanship, and unity. Not only does the tournament encourage healthy lifestyles for youth, it brings them together for a sport they love and helps them develop confidence and leadership skills to succeed in school and grow up to be active members of their communities. The tournament also exposes young people to important issues; this year’s theme was “Honouring Our Water,” calling attention to the vital importance of water stewardship and protection.

Celebrating 50 years of hockey history is no small feat! Year after year, a tremendous amount of work is put in to make this annual tournament a continued success for the players and families. It cannot be done without the dedicated organizers, Little NHL committee, parents, managers, coaches, volunteers, and sponsors.

Congratulations to the players, families, and community members that gathered for this milestone event!

Article written with support of the Little NHL.

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