

# ISC - Alberta Region COVID-19 Update for Chiefs: April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021



## Updates

### CBSA Land Border Updates:

The border remains closed for people who are not traveling by right or for non-essential purposes. There are some new regulations for those who are entering Canada by right. Molecular testing is now mandatory, and must be completed 72 hours prior to arrival in Canada. The test will need to be provided at the border. There is also a requirement to register your travel online or through the [Arrive Can App](#) prior to your arrival at the border. If you are unable to do so, you have the option to make a declaration in person at the Port of Entry/border. Upon arrival at the border, you will be provided with two COVID-19 tests and will be required to self-administer the tests on day one and day ten of the 14 day quarantine period. You will also be required to provide your quarantine plan and to check in when required with Public Health. If somebody arrives at the border with symptoms of COVID-19, they will be referred to a Public Health officer on site, and will be provided with a test. Depending on an individual's quarantine plan they may be directed to quarantine at an approved location to stay at their own expense.

### COVID-19 Contingency Funding:

As we continue to await budget announcements, we would like to share with you that there is funding available through our COVID-19 Contingency Fund to support Nations in responding to outbreaks, if and as they arise. This funding is limited and only available to communities experiencing an outbreak, and is not intended to support other activities related to COVID-19. This funding is the residual amount from the third iteration of the Indigenous Community Support Fund (ICSF). To access this funding, communities must submit a request outlining details of their outbreak emergency to [sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca](mailto:sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca). Please note that the ICSF proposal template previously provided may also be used to submit requests, if preferred. For needs outside of COVID-19 outbreaks, alternate funding streams are anticipated to be introduced in the coming weeks and further communication will be provided as information becomes available. If you have any questions or require further information, please contact your Community Liaison Team (CLT).

### Canadian Budget 2021:

Canada has made a historic investment of over \$18 billion to close the gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, supporting healthy, safe, and prosperous Indigenous communities, and advancing meaningful reconciliation with First Nations. Details and specifics are forthcoming but you can view the announcement [here](#).

## Question of the Day

**Q:** Can you get COVID after being vaccinated?

**A:** According to clinical trial data, the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine is 95 percent effective at preventing Covid-19 disease. The Moderna vaccine is 94 percent. None is 100 percent effective at preventing the illness. It is possible to get sick with COVID-19 — or possibly carry the virus asymptotically — after being fully vaccinated. These are called breakthrough infections.

While rare, with the pandemic entering a third wave and the number of the people receiving vaccines increasing, breakthrough infections are inevitable. The good news is, preliminary studies have indicated that when these breakthrough infections do occur, they're not as bad as they would have been had the person not been vaccinated. The likelihood of breakthrough infections will decline as more of the population is vaccinated, but these cases reinforce why public health measures need to be followed for the foreseeable future.

## National Info

PHAC has launched their webpage [Vaccines for COVID-19: What to expect at your vaccination](#).

# Alberta Cases:

as of April 20<sup>th</sup>, 3:30 p.m. MST

AB Total Confirmed (Apr.19 <sup>th</sup> – 1,345 new cases)	173,531
AB Recovered Cases	153,002
Confirmed First Nations On-reserve Cases	7,516
On-reserve Recovered Cases	7,192
On-Reserve Active Cases	246
Calgary Zone Confirmed	68,782
Central Zone Confirmed	14,056
Edmonton Zone Confirmed	63,501
North Zone Confirmed	17,576
South Zone Confirmed	9,523
Unknown Confirmed	93
Deaths due to COVID-19	2,048
On-reserve Deaths due to COVID-19	78
Variants of Concern Confirmed in Alberta	18,481

## Tax Information for Indigenous Peoples

The Canada Revenue Agency launched a new webpage to help you understand the benefits and credits you, and your Nation members, may be entitled to. There is a simplified tax filing system for First Nations using the Let Us Help You Get Your Benefits! Credit and benefit short return or the T1S-D, Credit and Benefit Return. First Nations people who live on a reserve and have been working from home for an off-reserve employer may [qualify for tax-free income](#). More info [here](#).

## Regional Snapshot



More Alberta case data can be found [here](#)

## Useful Links

### Mental Health Week:

This year marks the 70<sup>th</sup> annual Canadian Mental Health Association's (CMHA) [Mental Health Week](#), taking place **May 3-9, 2021**. Our Centre of Expertise on Mental Health in the Workplace (CoE) is leveraging CMHA's theme, [#GetReal about how you feel: name it, don't numb it](#), to raise awareness around mental health, alcohol consumption and substance use in the context of COVID-19. In collaboration with the Canada School of Public Service, we're pleased to present a virtual panel discussion to celebrate Mental Health Week:

**Event Date/Time:** Wednesday, May 5, 11:30am – 1pm

**Topic:** Alcohol consumption and substance use during COVID-19  
We encourage you to please promote [registration for this learning event](#) broadly within your respective organizations and networks.

### Telehealth Session April 28:

*Virtual Services for Addictions and Mental Health: Best practices and lessons learned*, on **Wednesday April 28 from 10 – 11:30 am**.

To connect to the session:

- via Zoom, go to <https://fnfn.zoom.us/join> and enter Meeting ID: 978 2566 0854 and Passcode: 929221
- from an audio line, dial 1-587-328-1099 and enter Meeting ID: 978 2566 0854 and Passcode: 929221
- from a videoconference-enabled room, go to [www.fnfn.ca](http://www.fnfn.ca) to register.

# Vaccine Update



## AstraZeneca - Availability and Risks:

For your off reserve members, participating pharmacies and Alberta Health Services will [begin booking appointments](#) for AstraZeneca vaccinations for Albertans born in 1981 or earlier. Walk-in vaccinations will be available at the walk-in clinics in Edmonton and Calgary, as well as specific pharmacies across the province. Alberta's decision to reduce the age of eligibility for AstraZeneca from 55 to 40 is based on public health recommendations looking at the benefit this vaccine offers weighed against the small risk of adverse events from this vaccine. AstraZeneca is approximately 80% protective two weeks after the first dose and has been shown to reduce infection by 60-70 per cent, and severe outcomes like hospitalization by 80 per cent.

We do acknowledge a case of the rare blood clot disorder known as VITT in Alberta. While every adverse reaction is unfortunate, it is important to remember that these blood clots are extremely rare and that this vaccine helps prevent the much higher risks that come from COVID-19 infection. As the COVID-19 vaccine rollout advances in Canada, Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada will continue to monitor the use of all COVID-19 vaccines closely and examine and assess any new safety concerns. Based on all of the evidence available internationally to-date, Health Canada continues to consider that the benefits of the AstraZeneca and COVISHIELD vaccines to protect against COVID-19 outweigh the potential risks.

## Tracking Potential Side-Effects of Vaccines:

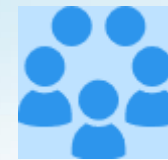
Beginning in early May, anyone receiving a vaccine will be able to volunteer for a method of tracking potential side-effects. This is voluntary and the individual can opt out anytime. After each dose the person will receive a text message one day after the shot and seven days after the shot (four texts in total). It will direct the individual to a link where they will answer nine yes/no questions so it's a very quick process. No personal information will be collected. The information will inform the MOHs of trends following vaccinations in First Nations. The individual may be contacted by a health professional depending on their responses. Anyone can take part in this project, the only requirement is having a phone that can receive text messages. Posters and information documents are being sent to all health centres and communities in the near future and we will continue to communicate as this pilot project gets underway. More information will be provided next week.

## Vaccine Snapshot

\*as of April 20<sup>th</sup>



**27,523** doses of vaccine have been administered in **46 Nations** (bands) in Alberta.



At least **19,383** First Nations people have received their first dose.



At least **3,469** First Nations people aged 65 years and older living in reserve or crown land have received their first dose.



At least **2,896** First Nations people aged 65 years and older have received two doses of the vaccine.



At least **8,140** First Nations people have received two doses of the vaccine.