

ISC - Alberta Region COVID-19 Update for Chiefs: *February 3rd, 2021*



Updates

Expanded COVID-19 Supports for Albertans:

Starting now, upon referral by Alberta Health Services, Albertans – including First Nations individuals living both on and off reserve - who must isolate or quarantine and cannot do so safely at home are eligible for a free-of-charge hotel room stay of up to 14 days, complete with culturally appropriate food and other supports. Additionally, those individuals are eligible for a \$625 payment when they completed self-isolating in their assigned hotel. Provincial COVID Care Teams will continue to provide on-the-ground supports and interventions to limit the spread of the virus. Supports include care packages with masks, sanitizers and information translated in multiple languages. Safe transportation to COVID-19 assessment and testing facilities is also available. For information on isolation and quarantine requirements and how to access supports, visit: alberta.ca/isolation or call 211.

Double-Masking:

Media have ran articles discussing the idea that the public should consider double masking. The double masking advice from the US appears to advocate for wearing an N95 mask underneath a medical grade surgical mask. Wearing two non-medical masks over top of each other may cause discomfort, leading people to handle the masks more and may result in poor placement over the mouth and nose. Currently, Canadian health authorities have **not** changed their guidance regarding mask usage and recommend people wear a single, non-medical face covering when out in public. When choosing a mask, look for ones with the following attributes:

- Choose a mask made of 3 layers
- 2 layers should be tightly woven material fabric, such as linen or cotton
- The third layer should be a filter-type fabric, such as a non-woven polypropylene fabric
- Choose a mask that is large enough to completely and comfortably cover the nose, mouth, and chin without gaping
- Masks should allow for easy breathing
- They should be able to fit securely to the head with ties or ear loops
- They should be comfortable and not require frequent adjustments
- Masks should be changed as soon as possible if they become damp or dirty
- Masks should maintain their shape after washing and drying

Avoid purchasing masks with valves as these will permit more respiratory droplets to bypass the mask. Ensure that when you touch your face, adjust your mask, or take off your mask, proper hand hygiene is performed. Masking guidance can be found [here](#).

Question of the Day

Q: What is a COVID-19 variant and will it impact the effectiveness of the vaccines?

A: Genetic variations of viruses, such as the one that causes COVID-19, are common and expected. When there have been several significant mutations to a virus it is called a variant. A variant is of concern when it affects: disease spread, disease severity, tests used to detect the virus, vaccines and treatments.

Monitoring for genetic changes in the virus allows better understanding of the potential impact of the mutations. Both new variants of concern include mutations that seem to make the virus more infectious, allowing it to spread more easily. However, they don't appear to affect the severity of the disease.

Currently, there's no conclusive evidence that these variants impact the effectiveness of authorized drugs and vaccines and don't currently affect diagnosis through authorized laboratory tests.

Given the limited data on the new variants, more research is needed to confirm these early findings and is being studied and monitored as information and data continues to come in. More information on COVID variants [here](#).

New -AB Variant Isolation

The Government of Alberta announced that should a person test positive for a Variant of Concern, and choose to stay in their own home to isolate, **household contacts need to stay at home in quarantine until 14 days have passed from the end of the case's isolation period, which is 10 days.** This means, household contacts that stay at home, need to quarantine for 24 days. More information [here](#).

Alberta Cases:

as of February 2nd, 3:30 p.m. MST

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|---|----------------|
| AB Total Confirmed (Feb. 1st – 268 new cases) | 124,831 |
| AB Recovered Cases | 116,259 |
| Confirmed First Nations On-reserve Cases | 5,217 |
| On-reserve Recovered Cases | 4,476 |
| On-Reserve Active Cases | 695 |
| Calgary Zone Confirmed | 47,927 |
| Central Zone Confirmed | 8,970 |
| Edmonton Zone Confirmed | 51,643 |
| North Zone Confirmed | 10,265 |
| South Zone Confirmed | 5,894 |
| Unknown Confirmed | 132 |
| Deaths due to COVID-19 | 1660 |
| On-reserve Deaths due to COVID-19 | 46 |

COVID-19 Vaccination in Canada Web Report Launch

The Vaccination Coverage report shows the percentage of priority populations who have been vaccinated, including health care workers, residents of congregate living facilities, adults in remote and isolated Indigenous and northern communities, and adults more than 80 years of age. Each Friday, Government Officials will provide proactive updates on vaccine administration and vaccination coverage during the Friday press conference as well as through social media.

<https://health-infobase.canada.ca/covid-19/vaccination-coverage/>

Regional Snapshot



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

Useful Links

COVID-19 Telehealth Session TOMORROW:

Please find attached the poster for this month's COVID-19 telehealth update, **Thursday February 4 from 1:30 – 3 pm.**

To connect to the session:

- via Zoom, go to <https://fnfn.zoom.us/join> and enter Meeting ID: 942 5059 8922 and Passcode: 864919
- from an audio line, dial 1-587-328-1099 and enter Meeting ID: 942 5059 8922 and Passcode: 864919
- from a videoconference-enabled room, go to www.fnfn.ca to register

Questions can be submitted in advance of or during the presentation to VChelp@FNTN.ca, or via Zoom during the presentation. This session will be recorded and posted to www.fnfn.ca.

Reminder: ISC Weekly COVID Vaccine Update:

ISC will run a vaccine information session every Tuesday from 1-1:30pm. These will be hosted by Dr. Parminder Thiara and Christina Smith. Contact your Community Liaison Team for more info.