

ISC - Alberta Region COVID-19 Update for Chiefs: *March 24th, 2021*



Updates

Variants of Concern:

Indigenous Services Canada, Alberta Region (ISC-AB) and the Government of Alberta continue to closely monitoring the COVID-19 variant strains in the province. Information on the location of variant strains by Alberta Health Services (AHS) zone is available [here](#). The COVID-19 variants are more infectious, causing it to spread more easily. There is also preliminary evidence that some variants have an impact on the efficacy of some vaccines and drugs, but more research is needed to confirm these findings. If a person tests positive for a COVID-19 variant, and chooses to stay in their own home to isolate (isolating in a different location, such as and isolation facility/hotel is encouraged), **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. An ISC-AB COVID-19 Variants Fact Sheet can be found on [OneHealth](#) under COVID-19 variants.

A Note on the Upcoming Spring Break:

In the spirit of community, and especially amidst the upcoming spring holidays, that desire to meet and be together is as strong as ever. ISC Medial Officers of Health echo Dr. Hinshaw's plea to not gather and to avoid all unnecessary travel during Easter/Spring break this year. We know news of the continuing vaccinations are promising signs but we are not quite through this yet. We ask for your continued patience, vigilance and sacrifice in maintaining all public health guidelines and protocols in your Nations to keep everyone safe until the majority of the population is fully vaccinated.

The following measures continue to be applicable to ALL people at this time:

- Wash or sanitize your hands often;
- Cover your coughs and sneezes;
- Avoid touching your face, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands;
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched;
- Practice physical distancing;
- Wear a mask or face covering when leaving the house;
- Avoid all unnecessary travel;
- Stay home if you are feeling sick.

Question of the Day

Q: Does Phase 2B of vaccination include those with chronic illness? Including those with mental health issues?

A: Yes, mental illness is included in the list. This includes severe mental illness or substance use disorder requiring a hospital stay during the past year (for example: schizophrenia, depression, anxiety disorders and others). For a more detailed list on Phase 2 eligibility please click [here](#). As a reminder, those with certain chronic conditions, such as type 1 diabetics, are at higher risk of severe disease from COVID-19 and are prioritized to receive vaccination. For more information on Phase 2 eligibility, please click [here](#).

Delay in Step 3 Re-Opening

Alberta did not meet the criteria for the province to move into Step 3 restrictions, and therefore will remain in Step 2 restrictions. The criteria dictated that the province needed to have fewer than 300 COVID-19 hospitalizations, and dropping case rates. As of March 22, the hospitalizations were below 300, but the case rates were climbing, thereby failing to meet the criteria. For more information, please [click here](#).

Alberta Cases:

as of March 23rd, 3:30 p.m. MST

AB Total Confirmed (Mar. 22 nd – 456 new cases)	142,390
AB Recovered Cases	134,246
Confirmed First Nations On-reserve Cases	7,042
On-reserve Recovered Cases	6,548
On-Reserve Active Cases	422
Calgary Zone Confirmed	54,650
Central Zone Confirmed	11,034
Edmonton Zone Confirmed	55,786
North Zone Confirmed	13,248
South Zone Confirmed	7,543
Unknown Confirmed	129
Deaths due to COVID-19	1,968
On-reserve Deaths due to COVID-19	72
Variants of Concern Confirmed in Alberta	1,711

Pharmacies who are providing COVID vaccines

This [link](#) indicates the pharmacies that are providing COVID vaccines – this will get updated regularly as pharmacies are added on. Note- that the initial 102 pharmacies carry the Pfizer vaccine and the new additional pharmacies (mostly in rural areas) carry Moderna so if individuals want to switch to get their 2nd shot at a pharmacy, they need to make sure they are receiving the same product as the 1st shot.

Regional Snapshot



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

Useful Links

Windspeaker Radio Townhall Recording:

COVID-19 Town Hall, Presented by the Windspeaker Radio Network and Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation featuring Dr. Hinshaw, Dr. Sarin and Dr. Adams available [here](#).

Alberta Indigenous Virtual Care Clinic:

Providing same day care to rural and urban indigenous people residing in Alberta via secure video or phone service. Call **1.888.342.4822** to book your appointment.
Hours: Mon -Fri 8:30am-4:30pm, Sat -Sun 12:30pm -4:30pm or Visit the website aivcc.ca for more information.

Vaccine Update



Ordering Vaccine for Phase 2, Group A

The supply of Moderna vaccine that has been allocated for 50 – 64 years of age living in a First Nations community is expected to arrive in vaccine depots March 25 and 26, 2021. Each community's vaccine allocation has been relayed to their vaccine depot. Community health nurses can now reach out to their vaccine depot and arrange for the delivery of their vaccine for the week of March 29, 2021 (or earlier if indicated by the vaccine depot). Please note, vaccine depots are not able to increase the number of doses of vaccine to be shipped, the depot will use the numbers that were submitted.

Health Canada's AstraZenca Update:

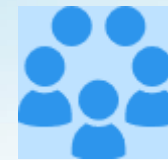
Following recent reports in Europe of blood clots following vaccination with the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, Health Canada communicated on March 11, 2021 that it was assessing these events, in collaboration with international regulatory partners. On March 18, Health Canada released a statement that the benefits of the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine continue to outweigh any risks. Health Canada has assessed the available data on the reported events and has determined that the AstraZeneca vaccine has not been associated with an increase in the overall risk of blood clots. There have been very rare reports in Europe of blood clots associated with low levels of blood platelets (thrombocytopenia). Blood clots, sometimes fatal, can also be due to COVID-19. Health Canada will continue to work with international regulators and review data and evidence as it becomes available, including as it pertains to these rare events. The Department is also working with AstraZeneca to ensure that healthcare professionals and Canadians have the safety information they need. While minor and temporary adverse events, such as headache, fever, fatigue, or pain at the injection site, are common after all vaccinations, people should seek medical attention if they experience any new or worsening symptoms. Canadians are also encouraged to [report any adverse events](#) after immunization to their healthcare professionals. For further information on COVID-19 vaccines authorized by Health Canada, including post-market updates, please visit [Health Canada's COVID-19 vaccines and treatments portal](#).

Vaccine Snapshot

*as of March 23rd



14,518 doses of vaccine have been administered in **46** Nations (bands) in Alberta.



At least **9,707** First Nations people have received their first dose.



At least **3,117** First Nations people aged 65 years and older living in reserve or crown land have received their first dose.



At least **2,177** First Nations people aged 65 years and older have received two doses of the vaccine.



At least **4,811** First Nations people have received two doses of the vaccine.