

ISC - Alberta Region COVID-19 Update for Chiefs: *May 5th, 2021*



Updates

Update on Provincial Restrictions:

Due to the spiking of cases during this third wave and to maintain hospital capacity the Province announced the following enhanced restrictions in any region or community except those with fewer than 50 cases per 100,000 people and fewer than 30 active cases. These will remain in place for at least three weeks.

Beginning **immediately**: Outdoor social gatherings now limited to 5 people, down from 10, also please limit this to one or two other households to reduce spread. Indoor social gathering remains prohibited. Places of worship limited to 15 people in person, Funerals limited to 10 people in person. Wedding and funeral receptions are still not permitted, workplaces with outbreaks must close for 10 days (with exemptions for essential services), and Retail stores must have no more than 10% of the fire code occupancy.

Beginning **Friday**: all K-12 schools will move to online classes until May 25, post-secondary classes must happen online. Exceptions will continue to be available for students with disabilities so they can continue to attend in-person classes as necessary.

Beginning **Sunday**: Hair and nail salons, tattoo parlors, personal services must close. Patio and in-person dining prohibited: take out and delivery only. Only outdoor sports allowed and only with members of your household. Appointments with dentists, doctors, and other health professionals by appointment only. Also, the Province is doubling the base fine for violating health restrictions to \$2,000 from \$1,000 plus tougher enforcement for repeat offenders.

Full details available [here](#).

Reminder on Current Regulations:

Alberta's government has passed legislation that amends the Employment Standards Code to ensure working Albertans can access paid, job-protected leave to get each COVID-19 vaccine. Every working Albertan can access up to three hours of paid, job-protected leave for each dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. All employees are eligible regardless of job status or length of employment. Starting May 10, updated public health measures will come into effect for continuing care facilities in Alberta. Indoor social visits with up to four visitors will be able to resume again, with certain restrictions and health measures in place. Full details available [here](#).

Question of the Day

Q: What are the changes to COVID testing?

A: Effective immediately, routine testing of all COVID-19 isolates for Variants of Concern will no longer occur. This decision was made due to two reasons. One is the inability of the lab to keep up with the high demand due to the sudden rise in COVID-19 cases, the majority of which are now one of the VOCs. The second is that the identification of the specific variant strain infecting an individual does not significantly alter the public health response. We must assume that every individually newly infected with COVID-19 is likely to have been infected with one of the three VOC strains that are circulating in the province at this time. The public health approach to cases, including the duration of isolation and quarantine, has not changed. Please note that ISC Medical Officers of Health and the CD team continue to work with community health staff to ensure that VOC screening occurs for the target groups identified provincially. The priority groups are positive cases related to outbreaks, in hospital and emergency departments, returning international travelers and health care workers.

Alberta Cases:

as of May 4th, 3:30 p.m. MST

AB Total Confirmed (May 3 rd – 1,743 new cases)	198,653
AB Recovered Cases	172,931
Confirmed First Nations On-reserve Cases	7,898
On-reserve Recovered Cases	7,493
On-Reserve Active Cases	327
Calgary Zone Confirmed	79,234
Central Zone Confirmed	17,108
Edmonton Zone Confirmed	69,951
North Zone Confirmed	21,462
South Zone Confirmed	10,823
Unknown Confirmed	75
Deaths due to COVID-19	2,099
On-reserve Deaths due to COVID-19	78
Variants of Concern Confirmed in Alberta	35,890

Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine

The Janssen COVID-19 vaccine is a single dose, viral vector vaccine authorized for use in Canada for adults 18 years of age and over. Health Canada has determined that the benefits outweigh the risks. At this time and based on current evidence, NACI recommends the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine may be offered to individuals 30 years of age and older without contraindications, if the individual wants to be receive a vaccine right away. As a single dose vaccine, the Janssen vaccine may be better suited for populations that are harder to schedule for a second dose (e.g., mobile populations and certain hard-to-reach populations). Currently this would be use for off-reserve members as Moderna continues to be the vaccine for on reserve First Nation individuals.

Regional Snapshot



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

Useful Links

Supporting School Wellness, Together:

[Schools.healthiertogether.ca](https://schools.healthiertogether.ca) is a virtual space to explore comprehensive school health as a framework to help students, staff, and school communities stay well during COVID-19, and beyond.

MOH Telehealth Session on May 13th:

Medical Officers of Health will provide a vaccine update as well as discussing hesitancy and other priorities as well as answering questions. **Thursday May 13th 1:30pm to 3:00pm**

Register [here](#).

The Alberta Indigenous Virtual Care Clinic (AIVCC):

Reminder: The Alberta Indigenous Virtual Care Clinic (AIVCC) serves individuals self-identifying as First Nations, Inuit and Métis and their families. AIVCC provides same-day care to rural and urban Indigenous people residing in Alberta via secure video or phone service and can be reached at 1-888- 342-4822 or www.aivcc.ca.

Vaccine Update



What about adverse effects after vaccination?

Individuals who are considering taking a COVID-19 vaccine may be concerned about potential adverse effects. An adverse effect might be an allergic reaction, severe diarrhea and or vomiting or anaphylaxis; Alberta Health lists 15 potential adverse effects. While it is true that certain people can have an adverse effect after taking a vaccine, these are often rare. How rare? For example, as of May 4, 2021 for First Nations in Alberta, there have been 32,093 vaccinations with 16 cases of adverse events reported (0.049%). For Alberta, 1,640,303 people have been vaccinated and 264 adverse events were reported in 259 people. This represents 0.015% of people who took a vaccine reported an adverse effect. Nationally, 11,526,938 doses have been administered with 4128 total adverse effects (0.036%) as of April 23, 2021. It is important to consider all of the factors when contemplating taking a vaccine, however, for the majority of people adverse effects happen very rarely. The benefits of vaccines authorized in Canada continue to outweigh the risks of contracting COVID-19 and potentially developing severe outcomes. More information can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Vaccines and Pregnancy:

NACI recommends that a complete vaccine series with a COVID-19 vaccine (preferably with an mRNA vaccine such as Moderna or Pfizer) may be offered to pregnant individuals in the authorized age group if a risk assessment deems that the benefits outweigh the potential risks for the individual and the fetus, and if informed consent includes discussion about the evidence of the use of COVID-19 vaccines in this population with a health professional. mRNA vaccines are preferred for use in pregnant individuals due to recently published data from a study in the United States indicating the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are safe in pregnant women. Based on current evidence, there is no increased risk of blood clots or related side-effects associated with the use of mRNA vaccines.

Teachers, Education and Child Care Workers:

Beginning May 4th, Alberta teachers and education workers can begin booking appointments through the AHS [online booking tool](#), 811 or participating pharmacies province wide. All certificated teachers actively teaching in kindergarten through Grade 12 are eligible, including those public, separate, francophone, charter, private/independent/ECS operators, and First Nations schools, substitute teachers, administrators and other certified teachers working in separate roles. This includes support workers, such as educational assistants, bus drivers, custodians and others who support schools.

Vaccine Snapshot

*as of May 4th



34,198 doses of vaccine have been administered in **46** Nations (bands) in Alberta.



At least **23,188** First Nations people have receive their first dose.



At least **3,606** First Nations people aged 65 years and older living in reserve or crown land have received their first dose.



At least **3,048** First Nations people aged 65 years and older have received two doses of the vaccine.



At least **11,010** First Nations people have received two doses of the vaccine.