

ISC Alberta Region Update for Chiefs

October 21, 2022

COVID Information

Alberta COVID Situation

Rising COVID-19 hospitalizations in Alberta are a reminder that COVID-19 is still present in Alberta. Data released Wednesday, October 19 by Alberta Health shows there were 1,070 people with COVID-19 in hospital as of October 18, an increase of 56 from last week.

Wastewater data tracking the presence of COVID-19 shows COVID-19 levels are present in significant quantities across all of the sites in Alberta. Fortunately, no one monitoring site is seeing spikes as high as that noted in previous waves.

Hospitalizations for First Nations individuals in Alberta are relatively stable with two First Nations individuals in hospital this week, up slightly from no hospitalizations last week. There were no fatalities of First Nations individuals on-reserve this past week.

Bivalent COVID-19 vaccine boosters are now available in Alberta

The bivalent Moderna COVID-19 vaccine is available in Alberta, which includes the BA.1 subvariant. [Click here to learn more.](#)

On October 7th, Health Canada approved Pfizer's new bivalent COVID-19 vaccine. Beginning Oct. 24, the bivalent Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine booster, which includes the Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 subvariants, will be available in Alberta for those 12 years and older. Bivalent vaccines provide better defense against Omicron variants, which are known for being able to evade vaccines. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Why should I get a COVID-19 booster when I am eligible to do so?

Keeping up to date on COVID-19 vaccinations is one of the most effective ways to protect yourself against severe outcomes, including hospitalization, death and also likely, long COVID.

Another way to further protect yourself and reduce the spread of COVID-19 is by choosing to follow individual public health measures, including:

- Staying home when you are sick
- Practicing proper respiratory etiquette (e.g., covering your coughs and sneezes)
- Improving ventilation
- Masking up in crowded indoor spaces
- Hand-washing and sanitization
- Social distancing from others when you can
- Using rapid tests when you have been exposed or have symptoms

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) [Updated guidance on COVID-19 vaccine booster doses in Canada \(PDF\)](#) and [Summary of NACI statement of October 7, 2022 \(PDF\)](#) are now also available online.

Rapid tests available from Alberta Health

To make a request for rapid tests, please email Alberta Health at rapidtesting@gov.ab.ca with the number of tests required. Orders will be processed and shipped as they are received. Reporting on usage to Alberta Health is not required.

Government of Canada removed COVID-19 border and travel measures

On October 1st Canada removed all COVID-19 entry restrictions for those entering Canada, as well as travel requirements. For more information, please visit the [full news release](#).

COVID and Health Information continued

Monkeypox Update

Nationally, provinces and territories have publicly reported 1411 cases of monkeypox as of October 7, 2022, with 41 of those cases being in Alberta. PHAC is continuing to collect and analyze epidemiological information reported by the provinces and territories. The most up-to-date information on the number of cases in Alberta, as well as other jurisdictions in Canada, can be found at [**Monkeypox: Outbreak update - Canada.ca**](#).

There is a monkeypox vaccine, IMVAMUNE, that is currently available in Alberta to those who are at risk of exposure to the virus. Details on eligibility can be found [**here**](#). Those who are eligible for pre-exposure vaccine can either dial 811 or contact their health centre to book an appointment.

You should call a health care provider immediately if:

- you develop symptoms of monkeypox
- you have had contact with a known or suspected monkeypox case

For further information, click here: [**Monkeypox virus | Alberta.ca**](#)

Question of the Day

What is a mammogram and why are they an important part of health screening for women?

A mammogram is an X-ray picture of the breast that can show signs of breast cancer. Mammograms are the best test available to find breast cancer early. Abnormal changes can be detected on a mammogram even when they are too small for you or a health professional to feel. Breast cancer is most effectively treated when it is found early. Sadly, in Canada, it is estimated that 1 in 8 women will develop breast cancer during their lifetime, and 1 in 34 will die from it. October is [**Breast Cancer Awareness Month**](#).

Women aged 45-75 are recommended to get a mammogram every two years, or as recommended by your care provider. See the [**Screening for Life**](#) website for more information on mammograms and screening for breast cancer.

Ask about Mammogram screening appointments by calling your local health centres or speaking to your primary care provider.

Links and Resources

COVID-19 - ISC Alberta MOH COVID-19 Telehealth Session - September 29 - [link to recording**](#)**

Lyme Disease

- Science Up First project: [**Lyme Diseases Can be Serious**](#)

Updated COVID-19 Communication resources for community health and safety [here**](#)**

Preparing for social gatherings this fall:

- [**Poster promoting layering individual public health measures**](#)
- [**Social media posts about lifted restrictions and respecting personal choice**](#)

NEW emergency resources, in case of a COVID-19 community outbreak:

- [**New poster for community outbreaks of COVID-19**](#)
- [**New social media post for community outbreaks of COVID-19**](#)

Wastewater Monitoring

If you would like to observe current trends in wastewater data, please click [**here**](#). To view wastewater data from the University of Calgary, click [**here**](#).

Health Canada

- Webpage link with downloadable poster: [**COVID-19: Stay up to date with your vaccinations - Canada.ca**](#)
- [**Video: COVID-19 vaccines: Continue to take action \(canada.ca\)**](#)

Vaccinating for both COVID-19 and Influenza

While the symptoms of influenza and COVID-19 can be experienced in a similar way, influenza and COVID-19 are two different diseases caused by two different viruses, so getting vaccinated against one of these viruses will not prevent you from catching the other one. Two different vaccines are required to provide protection against both viruses and to prevent serious outcomes such as hospitalization. Bivalent boosters for COVID-19 are already available, and **Alberta's influenza immunization campaign started on October 17th**. In Alberta, one can, and should, receive their influenza shot and their COVID-19 bivalent booster at the same time.

COVID-19 is still present in the province, and there are hospitalizations due to influenza in Alberta already. Medical experts are predicting a strong influenza season this year. Because both influenza and COVID-19 have a high rate of hospitalization, it remains important that we protect ourselves, our loved ones and our healthcare system by being vaccinated.

Sorting through the symptoms

As we move forward, it may become challenging to determine whether symptoms are being caused by the influenza virus, the COVID-19 virus or the common cold, which has many different sources and produces minor symptoms. Should you or a family member begin to feel unwell, it is always a good idea to rule out COVID-19 by way of testing, so that decisions around measures individuals can choose to take to protect those around them can be made.

For further information, please visit [Comparison of COVID-19, Influenza, Common Cold & Gastrointestinal \(GI\) Illness \(albertahealthservices.ca\)](https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/comparison-of-covid-19-influenza-common-cold-gastrointestinal-gi-illness).

[Is it a Cold, the Flu, or COVID-19? | National Institute on Aging \(nih.gov\)](https://www.nih.gov/health-topics/covid-19)

Common Symptoms of a Cold, the Flu, and COVID-19

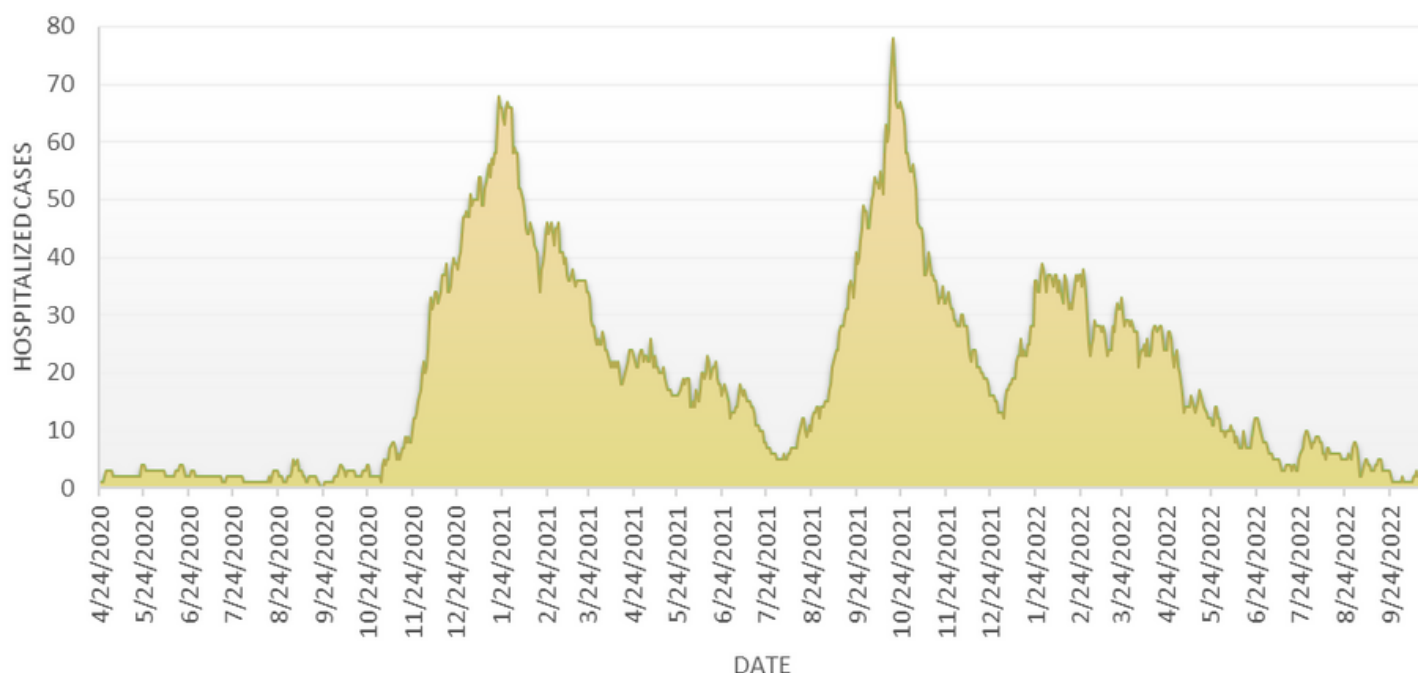
Learn more at www.nia.nih.gov/flu



Common Symptoms	Cold	Flu	COVID-19
Fever and/or chills		✓	✓
Headache		✓	✓
Muscle pain or body aches		✓	✓
Feeling tired or weak		✓	✓
Sore throat	✓	✓	✓
Runny or stuffy nose	✓	✓	✓
Sneezing	✓		
Cough	✓	✓	✓
Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing		✓	✓
Vomiting and diarrhea		✓	✓
Change in or loss of taste or smell			✓

COVID-19 Epidemiological Data

Number of Current COVID-19 Cases from First Nations Communities in Hospital



Confirmed COVID-19 Cases in First Nations Communities in Alberta, October 18, 2022

Treaty Area	Total Cases	Hospitalizations* Ever (includes incidental hospitalizations)	ICU (includes incidental ICU admissions)	Currently in Hospital (includes incidental hospitalization)	Deaths
Total (First Nations Communities)	20,720	1,092	257	2	180
Treaty 6	9,319	446	101	1	72
Treaty 7	5,916	352	93	0	64
Treaty 8	5,485	294	63	1	44
Alberta^	611,389	30,924	4,399	1,070	4,983

*Each ICU admission is also included in the total number of hospitalizations

^Data are up-to-date as of end of day October 17, 2022

VACCINE SNAPSHOT



138,073 doses of vaccine have been administered in **46** Nations (bands) in Alberta.



At least **3743** First Nations people aged 65 years and older living on-reserve or Crown land have received **three doses** of the vaccine.



At least **16,082** of First Nations people aged 12+ living on-reserve or Crown land have received **three doses** of the vaccine.



At least **1051** First Nations people aged 65 years and older living on-reserve or Crown land have received **four doses** of the vaccine.



At least **60,533** First Nations people aged 12+ living on-reserve or Crown land have received their **first dose** of the vaccine.

Additional Updates

From Indigenous Services Canada

Needs-based approach for 2022-23 COVID-19 Public Health Needs Funding

For 2022-23, ISC renewed the \$268 million in COVID-19 Public Health Needs funding originally announced in Budget 2022. This funding supports First Nations community-led responses to the pandemic, with priority support targeted to vaccines and booster rollout, testing, and surge capacity health human resources for urgent medical needs and outbreaks. This includes tribal councils and Indigenous Organizations that deliver community-based services in response to COVID-19 Public Health Needs. For more information, including eligible expenses, please refer to [Accessing COVID-19 public health support for First Nations communities \(sac-isc.gc.ca\)](https://sac-isc.gc.ca).

2022-23 COVID-19 Public Health Needs-Based Funding submissions should be made on a month-by-month basis, rather than quarterly. A COVID-19 Public Health needs-based funding request template is available at [COVID-19 Page \(onehealth.ca\)](https://onehealth.ca) and funding requests can be sent to the CDE Inbox (cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab@sac-isc.gc.ca) or via your COVID-19 Community Liaison.

If you have any questions, please email cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab@sac-isc.gc.ca or connect with your COVID-19 Community Liaison.

Nominees from Three First Nations located in Alberta for the National First Nations Water Leadership Awards

In 2018, Indigenous Services Canada created the National First Nations Water Leadership Award to recognize First Nation individuals, organizations or communities that have demonstrated leadership in First Nations water issues. Congratulations to Water Operators Brennon Laboucan (Whitefish Lake First Nation #459), Simon House (Paul First Nation) and Shannon Gladue (Kehewin Cree Nation) for their outstanding work. For more information on this year's nominees, please visit the [National First Nations Water Leadership Award website](https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca).

Updated service information for Indian Registration and Band List Offices

Throughout Alberta, Indian Registration and Band Lists office service hours remain the same: 8:00 am to 4:00 pm - Monday to Friday.

For the Edmonton office: In addition to scheduling client appointments for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, walk-in clients are also being served on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

The Calgary office remains closed for walk-in clients, however, service hours remain the same 8:00 am to 4:00 pm - Monday to Friday - via phone and mail.

From the Government of Canada

Up to \$40 million in Indigenous-led area-based conservation funding now available

On September 22, 2022, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) **announced** that the department is now accepting expressions of interest **until November 14, 2022** for up to \$40 million in **Indigenous-led area-based conservation** funding for **Indigenous Peoples to lead** or co-lead projects to establish and recognize protected areas. This includes other effective area-based conservation measures across Canada, such as Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas that can contribute to Canada's conservation targets. To be **eligible to apply** for funding, proposals must be Indigenous-led, contribute toward Canada's conservation targets within the next few years, and have the support of the relevant provincial or territorial government, or reporting authority.

Additional Updates

Indigenous Community Infrastructure Fund – Urban Component call for proposals is now open

The urban component of the Indigenous Community Infrastructure Fund provides capital infrastructure support specifically targeted to improving the physical capacity, safety, security and accessibility of facilities for urban Indigenous peoples. The call for proposals for 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025 Indigenous Community Infrastructure Fund, Urban Component funding is now open. The deadline to submit a proposal is December 30, 2022 at 11:59 pm, Eastern time.

Learn more about the [Indigenous Community Infrastructure Fund, Urban Component](#)

Four Indigenous works from the National Film Board featured at the imagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival

Audiences at the 2022 [imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival](#) will experience powerful and timely Indigenous storytelling across all genres, with four [National Film Board of Canada](#) (NFB) produced or co-produced works selected.

This year's festival takes place in person in Toronto from October 18 to 23, followed by six days of online programming from October 24 to 30, geo-restricted to Canada.

Click [here](#) for further information.

From the Government of Alberta

Diploma exams set to 20 per cent for 2022-23 school year

As students continue to address pandemic-related learning challenges, diploma exam weighting will be reduced to 20 per cent this school year. The weighting of diploma exams will transition over time and will return to 30 per cent in the 2023-2024 school year. Alberta Education works with experienced teachers to develop diploma exams. The government publishes various resources, including previous diploma exam questions and guides, for students. These resources are available on [alberta.ca](#).

Alberta Investment in Indigenous post-secondary learning

The government of Alberta has invested \$5 million in three areas of Indigenous post-secondary learning.

- up to \$3.25 million will be used to increase the programs and seats for Indigenous learners at First Nations colleges and public post-secondary institutions.
- up to \$1 million will go to workforce development initiatives. The department will engage with stakeholders to gain their perspectives on how this funding can best be used to support learners.
- to support the province's need for skilled tradespeople, a grant of \$750,000 over three years will support [Trade Winds to Success Training Society](#), an Indigenous-led non-profit that works with partners and industry to provide shop experience and apprenticeship training. The funding will create space for 100 students over three years. To learn more about Trade Winds to Success, click [here](#).

Indigenous Housing Capital Program

The Indigenous Housing Capital Program supports Indigenous governments and communities to build affordable off-reserve, off-settlement and on-settlement housing, where it is needed. The program is designed with a flexible, autonomous approach in mind, and encourages public and private developers to partner with Indigenous governments and organizations. IHCP applications are accepted on a continuous basis and are available at [alberta.ca/ihcp](#).