

To: Hospital Emergency Departments, Infection Control Practitioners, Family Health Teams, Family Physicians and Emergency Medical Services

From: Huron Perth Public Health

Date: Sunday, March 15, 2020, 2:45pm

Re: COVID-19 Update

Please see the following updates. Note: This information is constantly being updated. Further updates are expected.

Key Messages for Healthcare Providers:

1. Travellers:

Effective March 14, 2020: The Government of Canada has issued an official global travel advisory warning all Canadians to avoid non-essential travel outside of Canada until further notice. All travellers arriving in Canada from international points are being asked to self-isolate for 14 days as a precaution.

Travellers & Self-Isolation:

If individual has respiratory symptoms with any travel outside of Canada, they are to self-isolate for 14 days. If your symptoms last longer than 14 days, you must remain self-isolated until you are symptom-free for 24 hours.

2. No Travel Identified:

If you are experiencing mild respiratory symptoms, you are advised to stay home and self-isolate until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, and testing is not required.

3. Self-Assessment Tool:

A [self-assessment tool](#) has been developed by the Ministry. Please refer the caller to this assessment tool OR go through the questions with them (see below).

For individuals who are calling in because they have used the tool AND feel they have COVID-19:

- Self-isolate
- If symptoms worsen individual is to call their family physician, or seek medical attention.

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Self-Assessment Tool Questions (from Ministry of Health Website)

If you think you have 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or have been in close contact with someone who has it, use this self-assessment to help determine if you need to seek further care.

If you are having difficulty breathing or experiencing other severe symptoms, call 911 immediately. Advise them of your symptoms and travel history.

This information is not intended to provide medical advice. If you have medical questions, consult a health practitioner or your local public health unit.

If you are feeling unwell with any of the following symptoms:

- Fever, new cough or difficulty breathing (or a combination of these symptoms)?
- Muscle aches, fatigue, headache, sore throat, runny nose or diarrhea? Symptoms in young children may also be non-specific (for example, lethargy, poor feeding).

And have experienced any of the following:

- Have you travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?
- Does someone you are in close contact with have COVID-19 (for example, someone in your household or workplace)?
- Are you in close contact with a person who is sick with respiratory symptoms (for example, fever, cough or difficulty breathing) who recently travelled outside of Canada?

If you answered yes to these questions, you should seek clinical assessment for COVID-19 over the phone.

The majority of COVID-19 illnesses are mild. A clinician can help guide whether you will require further care or potential testing in person. Please use one of the following options:

- Contact your primary care provider (for example, family doctor). Let them know that you have used this self-assessment tool.
- Contact Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 and speak with a registered nurse. Let them know that you have used this self-assessment tool.

If you start to experience worsening symptoms, please visit your local emergency department. Call before you go and let them know you have used this self-assessment tool.

If you answered no to these questions, it is unlikely that you have COVID-19.

You should:

- Continue to monitor your health for a full 14 days after your return to Ontario or have contact with someone who is ill. If you develop any new symptoms, please seek clinical assessment and testing for COVID-19.
- Learn more about self-monitoring.

If you start to feel worse or have questions or concerns about your health, call your local public health unit, primary care provider (for example, family doctor) or Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000.

4. Assessment of vulnerable populations will continue as part of the overall risk assessment.
5. **Testing:**
Asymptomatic persons should not be tested. The ministry will be looking at this further.

Current HPPH direction:

Individuals to be considered for testing include the following categories:

Testing Priority¹:

- Symptomatic contacts of confirmed cases, *until community transmission is established*
- Individuals admitted to hospital with acute respiratory illness
- Health care workers with acute respiratory illness
- Individuals with acute respiratory illness who reside in long term care homes and retirement homes
- Individuals with acute respiratory illness who reside in other institutions and as directed by local public health officials
- Health care workers as part of a health care institutional outbreaks and as directed by local public health officials
- First Nations Community members living on-reserve with acute respiratory illness

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¹ Information taken from Ministry COVID-19 Case Definition March 12, 2020