

# COVID-19 FACT SHEET

## WHAT IS COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a new form of coronavirus identified in late 2019. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can infect animals and humans, causing a range of different symptoms.

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Symptoms of COVID-19 can appear up to 14 days after being exposed to the virus, and are similar to other respiratory illnesses, including the flu and the common cold. COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild to severe. The most common symptoms include:

- fever or chills
- cough
- loss of smell or taste
- sore throat
- difficulty breathing
- loss of appetite
- extreme fatigue or tiredness
- head and body aches
- nausea or vomiting
- diarrhea

## WHO HAS THE HIGHEST RISK OF SEVERE ILLNESS OR DEATH?

Elders, people with chronic health or respiratory conditions, pregnant people, and people with compromised immune systems due to disease or treatment have a higher risk of getting serious complications if they get COVID-19. However, due to the Delta variant, the number of people who need to be hospitalized is climbing, including young and previously healthy people.

## HOW IS IT SPREAD?

COVID-19 is spread by the respiratory droplets an infected person produces when they breathe, cough, sneeze, talk or sing. If you are in contact with an infected person, the droplets can enter your body through your throat, nose or eyes. Although infection from contact with contaminated surfaces is possible, it seems to be less common than droplets from close contact with an infected person.

## WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE SYMPTOMS?

Use the BCCDC [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#) on Thrive Health to determine whether you need to get tested. Some on-reserve communities can now test in-community. You can also call 8-1-1, your family doctor or your community health nurse to find the nearest collection centre. To get tested off-reserve, fill out the [Northern Health COVID-19 Test Booking Form](#), which provides a list of locations to choose from across the North.

## WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO AVOID GETTING SICK?

Getting the COVID-19 vaccine not only protects you from the virus but everyone around you too. The more people in a community who are vaccinated and therefore protected from COVID-19, the harder it is for the virus to spread. Additional precautions include frequent hand washing, physical distancing, wearing a mask in public settings, and following the latest health orders on public gatherings.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF I TEST POSITIVE?

If you test positive, you will need to isolate for 10 days starting from the first day you had symptoms or from the day of the test, if you don't have symptoms, and monitor your health carefully. Read the First Nations Health Authority's [Guide To COVID-19](#) to learn more about medical support and benefits programs.

## Sources:

<https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-A-Guide-To-COVID-19.pdf>  
<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19>