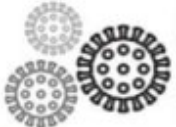




Information about coronavirus for Yukoners

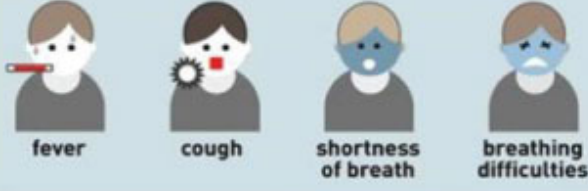
Updated March 13, 2020

What is a coronavirus?




Coronaviruses are a group of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases, such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

Symptoms



fever cough shortness of breath breathing difficulties

Severe cases



pneumonia kidney failure death

Credit: CBC News

Novel coronaviruses are new strains of the virus which have not been identified in humans before. Coronavirus Disease, or COVID-19, is a new respiratory virus first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China.

Some coronaviruses pass easily from person to person, while others do not.

Symptoms of coronavirus

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

What do we know about the virus?

- Both mild and severe illness have been reported.
- Many of the virus characteristics are still unknown.

What are health agencies doing?

The World Health Organization and the international community are conducting ongoing investigations to better understand coronavirus:

- where the disease came from;
- how it's transmitted; and
- the severity of illness.

Canada and its partners are closely watching and quickly responding to this outbreak. This work is being done by public health agencies at all levels in Canada and around the world, and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of Health and Yukon Communicable Disease Control are working with Public Health Agency of Canada. We'll make sure we take evidence-based and effective measures to protect all Yukoners.

[Watch a short video from the World Health Organization about coronavirus.](#)

What is Yukon doing?

Yukon health care providers are keeping up to date on coronavirus. They know how to:

- recognize the virus in a person who may be infected; and
- how to best care for them.

The Yukon Chief Medical Officer of Health and Yukon Communicable Disease Control are closely following this outbreak. They are:

- working with their counterparts across the country; and
- leading all preparations to protect Yukoners against this outbreak.

Learn more and protect yourself

The following everyday practices help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including coronavirus (COVID-19):

- wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds ([download one of our hand washing signs to post as a reminder](#));
- use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available;
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands;

- avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are touched a lot;
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue immediately into the trash; or
- cover your mouth and nose with your inner elbow when you cough or sneeze; and
- stay home when you are sick.

What should you do if you think you have coronavirus (COVID-19)?

The Public Health Agency is monitoring the situation carefully. Currently, the risk within Canada and Yukon is low. Current information suggests that limited human-to-human transmission of coronavirus may have occurred in some reported instances where individuals were in close contact with people who had symptoms.

When to stay at home and phone 811 or your health provider

If you:

- have signs of a respiratory infection (fever, cough or shortness of breath)
AND within 14 days have:
 - travelled outside of Canada **OR**
 - have lived with, or provided direct care to a person who is a probable or confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19);
OR
 - lived with, or provided direct care to, a person with acute respiratory illness who has recently travelled outside of Canada.

Please stay at home and phone 811 or your health provider.

Should I buy or wear a mask?

There are two reasons why someone may choose to wear a mask:

- protect themselves from getting an infection from other people; or
- prevent themselves from passing an infection to other people.

There is no evidence that masks can protect a person from a viral infection in the general public. We do not recommend that you wear a mask to protect yourself from coronavirus, or other viral infections.

There is no vaccine for the coronavirus. But, you can get the seasonal flu shot if you haven't received it this year.

People with certain health conditions may need to wear a mask. If your health care provider has recommended you wear a mask, you should wear it. Public shortages of masks could mean that people who should be wearing masks may not be able to obtain them.

A source you can trust is the World Health Organization's [guidelines about mask use](#) to prevent novel coronavirus infection.

Wearing a mask in a health care facility

We can all help reduce the spread of infectious diseases in health care settings. We do this by consistent use of appropriate infection and prevention control. This protects patients, staff and visitors.

If you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, you may be asked to wear a mask as a precaution to prevent infecting others, if you're in a:

- doctor's office;
- health centre;
- continuing care facility; or
- hospital.

Health care providers come in contact with many sick patients every day. Health care providers wear masks to protect themselves from getting an infection from a sick patient.

I work with someone who is returning from a country that has cases of COVID-19. I have an underlying health condition (such as undergoing chemotherapy). Should I be worried they will bring the coronavirus back to me?

- With all of the news about coronavirus, you may feel some anxiety about what to do, and wonder if you are at risk, especially with concerns of an underlying health condition.
- At this time, the risks associated with travel back from other parts of the world are linked to the country someone has travelled.

- Returning travellers are being provided instruction on how to watch for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, what to do if any signs or symptoms develop and who to contact.

I work with or employ someone who is returning from a country with COVID-19 to Yukon. Can they come to work, attend school or go to other community events?

At this time, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) has provided 2 distinct recommendations related to travellers returning from countries with COVID-19 to Canada. These recommendations are being followed by all provinces and territories in Canada, including Yukon. The recommendations are:

- **People returning from the specific province of Hubei in China (not other parts of China), Iran and Italy should:**
 - self-isolate for 14 days after departing Hubei, Iran or Italy;
 - contact Yukon Communicable Disease Control (YCDC) at 867-667-8323 or 1-800-661-0408 (ext. 8323) for ongoing support or any questions or concerns.

After this 14-day period, persons can return to work and join in any activities they choose.

This information along with information on COVID-19, is being provided to travellers prior to entering Canada, including Canadian airports. Returning travellers should follow all instructions provided.

The use of self-isolation and asking individuals to report when they have signs and symptoms is used for other diseases (i.e. measles), and is proven to work well.

- **People returning from other international locations (all areas except Hubei province, Iran and Italy)**
 - There is NO recommendation to self-isolate.
 - To be very careful, individuals have been asked to monitor for symptoms for 14 days after leaving, and report any symptoms to their health care provider or Yukon Communicable Disease Control (YCDC) at 867-667-8323 or 1-800-661-0408 (ext. 8323) to arrange for testing.
 - There is NO recommendation to limit work, leisure or social activities for 14 days after leaving these countries;
 - Individuals can return to work and join in any normal activities.

- Individuals should be welcomed back into their work place/school/community.

This information along with information on COVID-19, is being provided to travellers prior to entering Canada, including Canadian airports. Returning travellers should follow all instructions provided.

Persons returning from the countries with [PHAC active health notices](#) can call Yukon Communicable Disease Control (YCDC) at 867-667-8323 or 1-800-661-0408 (ext 8323) if you have any questions or concerns.

What can I do to keep my employees safe from COVID-19?

Although there are no cases of COVID-19 in Yukon, there are cases of influenza and other respiratory viruses. This is a good opportunity to ensure the following practices are in place in your workplace. You should:

- undertake routine environmental cleaning (download information on [cleaning and disinfecting the work place](#) and [cleaning and disinfecting your home](#));
- [promote respiratory etiquette](#);
- promote regular hand washing ([download one of our hand washing signs to post as a reminder](#))
- encourage and support staff to stay home when they are ill;
- support and welcome staff and clients returning from international travel;
- remember the current risk to Yukoners is low; and,
- ensure you and your employees do not make assumptions about the risk of others having COVID-19 based on their ethnicity or country of origin.

Information for travellers

The Public Health Agency of Canada has put in place measures to detect and contain this infection. These include information and health screens at multiple Canadian international airports.

At this time travel within Canada is deemed low risk. Yukoners should carefully assess the appropriateness of international travel during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Not all travel is the same, each country or area may have different levels of risk, that can change quickly. All travellers should be aware that there are health risks related to COVID-19.

There is an increased risk of more severe outcomes for Canadians:

- aged 65 and over;
- with compromised immune systems; and
- with underlying medical conditions

As well, the risk for COVID-19 may be increased for certain settings such as:

- heavily affected areas;
- international conferences and other large gatherings in enclosed spaces; and
- Government of Canada is advising that Canadians avoid all travel on cruise ships due to the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, until further notice.

Travelers should also expect increased screening measures at points of entry for international destinations, including airports. Local authorities may impose control measures suddenly, including movement restrictions such as quarantines.

Upon returning to Canada, individuals have been asked to monitor for a cough, fever or difficulty breathing for 14 days after leaving the destination. If you develop any of these symptoms, contact your health care provider or Yukon Communicable Disease Control (YCDC) at 867-667-8323 or 1-800-661-0408 (ext. 8323) to arrange for testing.

While there are currently no COVID-19 travel related restrictions in Canada, the situation is evolving and staff should look for regular updates from the [Government of Canada on COVID-19](#).

All travellers should pay close attention to Canada's recommendations [on travel health notices](#), as these are updated frequently.

If you become sick after returning to Canada from abroad, tell your healthcare provider.

I have a trip outside of Canada planned, should I go?

All Yukoners are recommended to cancel or postpone all international non-essential travel. This includes travel to the United States. At this time, there are no restrictions on travel within Canada. For the most up-to-date travel information from the Government of Canada visit <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>

I have an upcoming trip, which includes air travel. Should I wear a mask on the plane or in public areas?

- No. There are currently no recommendations for the use of a face mask in the general public.
- Masks have not been shown to have value in protecting you from viral infections in the general public.
- Public shortages of masks could mean people who should be wearing masks, may not be able to obtain them.
- See the section *Should I buy or wear a mask* for more information.

Travel information for students and school staff

The Government of Yukon has cancelled all international school trips, except trips to Alaska. This decision is based on the advice of Yukon's Deputy Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Catherine Elliott.

We're deciding about trips to Alaska case by case with Dr. Elliott. If your school has a trip to Alaska coming up, we'll provide an update directly to your school.

School trips within Canada will continue but check in with your school for updates.

We know cancelling trips cause a lot of inconvenience after so much hard work. But we need to put the health and safety of students, school staff and trip volunteers first.