

**Coronavirus: COVID-19**  
**Current Update – March 10, 2023**

**Public Health Ontario’s Weekly COVID-19 Summary**

Public Health Ontario (PHO) warns us to interpret these trends with caution because they are not entirely accurate. COVID-19 cases, contacts, and outbreaks are only being managed in high-risk populations and settings. There is also a delay in reporting, especially with severe outcomes and deaths. Reported case counts are a severe underestimate of the actual extent of COVID-19 infections in Ontario.

Last week, indicators for COVID-19 were similar overall compared to the previous week. The number of reported COVID-19 cases in Ontario was 3,914 compared to 3,953 the week before. Last week, there were 255 reported COVID-19-related hospitalizations, which is lower than the week before, and 34 reported COVID-19-related deaths, which is also lower than the week before.

The total number of confirmed, ongoing COVID-19 outbreaks in high-risk settings is 80, compared to 102 outbreaks the week before. The number of outbreaks remained the same in hospitals (from 24 to 24) and decreased in Long-Term Care homes (from 25 to 24), retirement homes (from 30 to 18), and congregate living settings, such as group homes/supportive housing, shelters and correctional facilities (from 23 to 14).

Source:

1. [https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/nCoV/epi/respiratory-virus-overview-ontario.pdf?rev=448a6bf1f6d3496db3e95406d2ca2653&sc\\_lang=en](https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/nCoV/epi/respiratory-virus-overview-ontario.pdf?rev=448a6bf1f6d3496db3e95406d2ca2653&sc_lang=en)

—

**Sick Kids Seromark COVID-19 Immunity Study**

This Saturday March 11, the Sick Kids team will be at the Jamaican Canadian Association (995 Arrow Road, Toronto, M9M 2Z5) from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The study looks at how COVID-19 vaccines protect Black Canadians, and others in the community. Join to learn more about vaccine response in your community!

Who can participate? Anyone who has received a COVID-19 vaccine.

How do I participate? Remotely, or the SickKids team can come to your community.

What happens when I participate? They will ask for your consent for a questionnaire form and a blood test.

Click [here](#) for more information. You can also email [seromark.project@sickkids.ca](mailto:seromark.project@sickkids.ca) or call 416-813-7654 Ext: 227352.

---

### **Message from the City of Toronto**

It is important for everyone 6 months old and older to stay up-to-date with their COVID-19 vaccinations.

- The levels we use to measure the prevalence of COVID-19 are stable in Toronto.
- The variant XBB.1.5 is now the dominant variant in Ontario, and it's projected to increase to 66.1% by March 8, 2023 ([source](#)).
- Early data from the CDC shows that the vaccines can provide protection against this variant from severe infection ([source](#)).
- Anyone 5 years and older who has not gotten a bivalent vaccine booster after September 1, 2022, should still get their booster for stronger protection against this new variant.

In addition to getting vaccinated, we can reduce the spread of COVID-19 by continuing to:

- Follow public health measures (click [here](#) to learn more) and use layers of protection (click [here](#) to learn more)
  - Stay home if you are sick or have symptoms, get tested and treatment if you are eligible. Click [here](#) for information on testing and click [here](#) for information on treatment.
- 

### **At-risk Canadians should get additional COVID-19 bivalent booster this spring, according to NACI**

Canadians who are at risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 are being advised to get an additional booster dose this spring.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization, or NACI, says that includes adults 80 and up, those living in long-term care homes, and those living in other congregate settings for seniors or those with complex medical needs.

NACI is also calling on adults 18 and older who are moderately to severely immunocompromised, either due to medical treatment or an underlying health condition, to get a booster shot.

NACI says adults between 65 and 79 should also get vaccinated, especially if they do not have a known history of being infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.

The committee says the Omicron-containing bivalent mRNA-based vaccines are the preferred option for booster shots. The recommended interval is six or more months from the last COVID-19 dose or infection with the virus, whichever is longer.

NACI says it will continue to monitor emerging evidence on the virus, including how long protection from bivalent boosters lasts, to provide further recommendations on the timing of subsequent boosters, if they are warranted.

Source:

1. [https://www.thestar.com/life/health\\_wellness/2023/03/03/at-risk-canadians-should-get-covid-19-bivalent-booster-shot-this-spring-naci.html](https://www.thestar.com/life/health_wellness/2023/03/03/at-risk-canadians-should-get-covid-19-bivalent-booster-shot-this-spring-naci.html)

---

### **Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership Mental Health and Disability Services Survey 2023**

Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership (TEQ LIP) is launching a survey for service providers in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Based in Toronto, TEQ LIP is an IRCC funded partnership program that engages with diverse stakeholders in collaborative actions to facilitate newcomer settlement in Scarborough.

The survey is titled 'TEQ LIP Mental Health and Disability Services Survey 2023' and is being conducted to learn about the current mental health and disability services provided to refugees and newcomers. This survey is specifically looking to understand how the COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted these services and their delivery. Information collected in this survey will help inform the development of capacity building sessions for service providers in the mental health and disability sectors.

#### **Who this is survey is for:**

This survey is intended for service provider organizations in the GTA who are:

- i) providing mental health services, and/or disability services to refugees and newcomers
- ii) and/or serving newcomer clients with disabilities and/or mental health needs

#### **How you can participate:**

The survey will be open from February 23rd 2023 - March 16th 2023. It will take 20 minutes to complete. Survey Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8SRJLOY>. Please share the survey with your networks.

**Accessibility:** This survey can be completed over the phone. Please contact Azreen Sikder at [asikder@ccscan.ca](mailto:asikder@ccscan.ca) to coordinate or if you have any questions. Thank you for your time!

---

## **The Burn: reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic through art**

Toronto residents are invited to heal and cleanse through the restorative power of rising heat, ash, smoke and water. The Burn, an interactive art installation inspired by the universally sacred elements of fire and water, provides a sanctuary for comfort and care with rituals of intention setting, releasing and letting go.

Until March 11, residents are invited to engage with The Burn's travelling vessels by setting healing intentions on wooden spheres. Following the tour, take part in a commemorative ceremony on Nathan Phillips Square on Saturday, March 11, where the wooden spheres will be ignited for a 24-hour burn. Ashes from The Burn will be harvested, mixed into soil and spread across city gardens to honour the spirit of our collective healing. More information is available at [Toronto.ca/TheBurn](https://toronto.ca/TheBurn).

This installation is part of Stronger TOgether, a program for Toronto residents to recognize and reflect on the COVID-19 pandemic. More information is available at [Toronto.ca/StrongerTOgether](https://toronto.ca/StrongerTOgether).

Source:

<https://www.toronto.ca/news/city-of-toronto-reflects-on-pandemic-response-three-years-after-torontos-first-confirmed-case-of-covid-19/>

---

***These are just a few of the COVID-19 vaccine clinics happening in Toronto in February!  
Click [here](#) to see more!***

---

## **Request Drive-Through Vaccinations for Children with Disabilities in East Toronto**

- South East Toronto Family Health Team (SETFHT) is offering drive-through vaccinations for children aged six months and older with disabilities.
  - Parents, caregivers and families who need this service should e-mail [info@setfht.on.ca](mailto:info@setfht.on.ca) with their request.
- 

## **Toronto's City-Run Clinics**

[Appointments](#) are strongly recommended at this time for each person being vaccinated. COVID vaccine appointments can be booked online or by calling 1-833-943-3900 (TTY 1-866-797-0007). City-run clinics are also currently accepting walk-ins.

Everyone aged 6 months and over can safely get the COVID-19, and flu vaccine at the same time. These locations are accessible. Please bring all required mobility devices with you. You don't need a health card, but you need to bring some form of identification with you. ([source](#))

- **Metro Hall:** 214 Wellington St. W., Monday to Thursday, noon to 6 p.m. and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Crossroads Plaza:** 2625 Weston Rd., Monday to Thursday, noon to 6 p.m. and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **East York Town Centre/Thorncliffe Park Community Hub:** 45 Overlea Blvd., Tuesday to Friday, noon to 6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **1 Eglinton Square:** Tuesday to Friday, noon to 6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **Cloverdale Mall:** 250 The East Mall, Tuesday to Friday, noon to 6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- **Mitchell Field Community Centre:** 89 Church Ave., Tuesday to Friday, noon to 6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### **Accessibility/Accommodation at City-Run Clinics**

All City-run clinics are able to offer accommodation. Each clinic has parking near the entrance, ramps, elevators, and wheelchairs. Staff are also on site at each clinic to support as necessary. Clients who need a care provider or service animal with them will be accommodated. There are also privacy rooms available upon request.

If you require an accommodation, alert a staff member upon arrival or at any time while at the clinic.

### **Vaccine Clinic Accommodation Request**

You may also request an accommodation ahead of your appointment by filling out the Vaccine Accommodation Survey (click [here](#)). You will be asked the date and time of your vaccination appointment, and a public health nurse will contact you within two business days to confirm the details of your request.

Examples of accommodations they can provide include:

- The use of a private area in the clinic to receive the vaccine
- Using a guide to help navigate the clinic
- Access to a cot to lie down after you have received the vaccine
- Access to ASL interpretation (at least 48 hours' notice required)

If you need assistance filling out the survey or requesting accommodation please call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 (TTY: 416-392-0658).

---

### **The 519 Wellness Hub**

Access COVID-19 vaccines, flu vaccines, and other health services at the 519's low-barrier, drop-in wellness hub. Ontario Health (OHIP) or Interim Federal Health (IFH) card not necessary, but good to bring.

Accessibility: The clinic takes place on the third floor. The 519 is an accessible facility with a ramp, elevator, and all-gender washrooms.

When: Every Wednesday until March 29, From 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Where: 519 Church Street.

Health services:

- COVID-19 vaccines: first and second dose and bivalent booster available (for those eligible)
- Flu (influenza) shot
- Referrals for catch-up vaccines: HPV, Hep B, meningitis, and shingles (for those eligible)
- Blood sugar and blood pressure checks
- Health ambassadors will work with you to explore options for accessing health and social support services
- Free HIV self-testing
- Stay tuned for potential mental health screening coming up!

Questions? Email [community@The519.org](mailto:community@The519.org).

---

### **SickKids COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics**

SickKids Hospital is hosting weekly COVID-19 vaccine clinics for any infant/child aged six months to under five years who requires accommodations due to medical complexity, developmental disorder, mobility challenges, communication, behavioural and other specialized needs (including significant fear of needles).

This clinic will happen each Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. More dates and times are expected to become available soon.

It's by appointment only. To make an appointment, you need to be referred through your doctor. For any questions regarding patient referrals, contact [mobile.vaccination@sickkids.ca](mailto:mobile.vaccination@sickkids.ca).

Do you have questions or concerns about the COVID-19 vaccine for children? Book an appointment with the SickKids COVID-19 Vaccine Consult Service. Visit [sickkids.ca/vaccineconsult](https://sickkids.ca/vaccineconsult) to book an appointment!

---

### **Health Connect Ontario - 811**

Connect with a Registered Nurse day or night for free, secure and confidential health advice.

Check your symptoms, get health advice with referrals to local & specialized services as needed and access to a medical library. Access safe, high-quality care and avoid unnecessary visits to the emergency room. This service is an easy way to get connected to care you or your loved ones need, but it does not replace your other touch point with your health care provider. In a medical emergency call 911 immediately.

OHIP not needed. Anonymous calls accepted.

Refugee Health Hotline calls are now redirected automatically to 811

Online (including live chat): [Ontario.ca/healthconnectontario](https://ontario.ca/healthconnectontario)

Call: 811 or toll free TTY line 1-866-797-0007

---

### **Ontario's COVID-19 Vaccine booking portal:**

Those eligible for a vaccine can book here: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/book-vaccine/>.

Or by phone at: 1-833-943-3900.

For general information about vaccines, call: 1-888-999-6488.

---

### **In Toronto? Here are two transportation options to go to your vaccine appointment:**

1. The Ontario Community Support Association's Accessible Drive-to-Vaccines program provides door-to-door rides to vaccination sites for people with disabilities, including seniors with mobility issues. You must have a vaccination appointment booked. You need to request a ride at least 48 hours before the appointment. To book, call 211 or click [here](#) to request an appointment online.

2. Wheel-Trans is committed to providing vaccine rides to the elderly and people with disabilities in Toronto. Wheel-Trans is offering individual rides to City-run mass vaccination

sites, pharmacies, doctor's offices, and clinics that are giving out vaccines. Customers may be joined by one Support Person on their Wheel-Trans ride.

You may be eligible for Wheel-Trans service if your disability prevents you from using the TTC's conventional transit for all or part of your trip.

If you are not yet a Wheel-Trans customer, and you think you may qualify for Wheel-Trans service, you are invited to apply by calling Wheel-Trans Customer Service at 416-393-4111, Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Existing Wheel-Trans customers can book their rides to and from their vaccine appointments by calling Wheel-Trans Reservations at 416-393-4222, seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. or through the Wheel-Trans Self-Booking Website. Access the website by clicking here: <https://mywheel-trans.ttc.ca/SelfBooking2020/Login?ReturnUrl=%2fSelfBooking2020>.

### **Upcoming Events:**

## **North Yorkers**

### **The Communication Enrichment Class (ongoing)**

The class runs virtually on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1 p.m. Class is on pause for the holiday season and will resume on January 10, 2022. You can find the online blog at <https://nydpcec.wordpress.com/> where class activities will be posted before each class. If you or someone you know has a communication disability and may be interested in participating in the class, please contact Jessica, our Manager of Client Services via email at [jessica.nydp@gmail.com](mailto:jessica.nydp@gmail.com).

## **March of Dimes**

### **One to One Peer Support Program**

The One to One Peer Support program is still running. No one understands quite like somebody who has lived the same experience. Our Peer Support program pairs caregivers with peers who are also experienced in caregiving and can offer practical advice and support by phone or a video chat. Contact Angie Clark by email at [aclark@marchofdimes.ca](mailto:aclark@marchofdimes.ca) or call 1-905-301-8114 for more information or to get connected.

—

If you or someone you know uses Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), and requires resources related to COVID-19, please contact Jessica ([jessica.nydp@gmail.com](mailto:jessica.nydp@gmail.com)) and she can assist you in accessing and/or creating various communication tools.



If you think you may be experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, take the self-assessment at [www.ontario.ca/coronavirus](http://www.ontario.ca/coronavirus). Follow all directions from your medical provider or your local health unit at the following phone numbers:

Health Connect Ontario: 811  
Telehealth Ontario: 1-866-797-0000  
Toronto Public Health: 416-338-7600  
Peel Public Health: 905-799-7700  
Durham Region Health Department: 905-668-7711  
York Region Public Health: 1-877-464-9675

Please refer to previous updates as lots of important information has been provided that may still be relevant. If you have any questions or require more information on how you can protect yourself and those around you from the COVID-19 virus, please contact our Senior Manager of Client Services/Lead AAC Facilitator Jessica at 416-222-4448 or [jessica.nydp@gmail.com](mailto:jessica.nydp@gmail.com).

Clients wondering what's next, most people have been vaccinated.  
RATs coming back? Kids are tired of that, wearing masks in classrooms.