

## **Coronavirus: COVID-19**

Current Update – February 9, 2024

### **Public Health Ontario's Weekly COVID-19 Summary**

The number of reported COVID-19 cases on Feb 3, 2024 was 1,715. The total number of deaths caused by COVID-19 reported in the week was 17. The total number of covid-19 outbreaks in Ontario during this period were 77. Total number of hospital admissions was 81.

Homeless people are more likely to have underlying health conditions that make them more vulnerable to illness. People who are homeless have high rates of COVID-19 reinfection, putting the health of an already vulnerable population at further risk, a study published Friday in the BMC Infectious Diseases journal says.

Homeless people in Toronto who had COVID-19 were more than twice as likely to get it again as people who had housing, said lead author Lucie Richard, a senior research associate at the MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions at St. Michael's Hospital. The higher rates of reinfection are likely due to increased exposure to the virus as homeless people are "forced to reside in congregate, crowded shared settings which are rife with transmission," Richard said. They are also more likely than the general public to have underlying health conditions that make them more vulnerable to illness, she said.

This is a warning that we need to take care of our inner cities, especially our homeless (people). When you look at the prospect of reinfection and then the greater likelihood of long COVID, you're only worsening the disparities for people who are surviving homelessness. It's important to give homeless people easy access to the latest XBB subvariant-targeting COVID-19 vaccine to help reduce reinfection — and it's also vital to address the issue of housing.

### **Sources:**

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Data-and-Analysis/Infectious-Disease/Respiratory-Virus-Tool>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/homeless-people-toronto-covid-reinfection-1.7103879>

## **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 healthcare 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): <https://health811.ontario.ca/static/guest/chat-online>

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.

## **Upcoming Events:**

### **North Yorkers - The Communication Enrichment Class (ongoing)**

The class runs virtually on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1 p.m. 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 [jdunn@nydp.ca](mailto:jdunn@nydp.ca)

## **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.

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If you or someone you know uses Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), and requires resources related to COVID-19, please contact Jessica ([jdunn@nydp.ca](mailto:jdunn@nydp.ca)) 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 [jdunn@nydp.ca](mailto:jdunn@nydp.ca).