

Coronavirus: COVID-19

Current Update – April 5, 2024

Public Health Ontario’s Weekly COVID-19 Summary

The number of reported COVID-19 cases on March 30, 2024 was 526. The total number of deaths caused by COVID-19 reported in the week was 4. The total number of covid-19 outbreaks in Ontario during this period were 25. The average daily hospital bed occupancy reported during the week was 246.

McMaster University researchers have found that when masking and vaccinations were used, schools were not a major source of **COVID-19** transmission.

“After that initial shutdown and stay at home order had (been) put in place, in later periods, when schools were reopened or closed, we didn’t see an impact on community-level transmission,” said Sarah Neil-Sztramko, a professor in health research at McMaster and lead author of the study.

“Rather, the patterns of transmission we saw in schools was much more reflective of what was already happening in the community.” The research shows that children in daycares and students in elementary and high school can stay in the classroom when certain infection prevention and control measures are in place because removing them did not result in spikes of COVID-19 in the broader community.

“Vaccination, not surprisingly, was really effective in those school settings to prevent transmission. Masking was also one of the more effective interventions,” Neil-Sztramko said. Test-to-stay policies were also effective at mitigating COVID-19’s spread in schools and daycares. This allowed children who tested negative after a confirmed case in a class to attend school instead of having everyone be part of a two-week quarantine at home. Researchers hope the findings will provide a strong and factual foundation on how to properly deal with significant outbreaks caused by future variants or other infectious diseases.

Sources:

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

<https://globalnews.ca/news/10300870/school-closures-ontario-not-prevent-covid-study/>

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

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 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 (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. 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.