

Coronavirus: COVID-19
Current Update – October 8, 2021

As of October 8th, 2021, Canada has a total of 1,652,434 confirmed cases of COVID-19. Ontario has 590,677 cases and Toronto has 179,401 cases.

Ontario reports 573 new COVID-19 cases

Today, there are 573 new cases of COVID-19 in Ontario. The seven-day average is 469, down from 597 at this time last week. The positivity rate is 1.8%.

Of these 573 new infections, 381 people are either unvaccinated, partially vaccinated or have an unknown vaccination status. The remaining 192 people are fully vaccinated.

Today's cases were found in: Toronto (104), Peel Region (80), York Region (41), Windsor-Essex (35), and Ottawa (32). All other health units in Ontario reported fewer than 30 new COVID-19 cases.

According to the province, there are 271 COVID-19 patients in hospital, including 43 people who are fully vaccinated and 228 people who are either not fully vaccinated or have an unknown vaccination status. There are 154 patients in an Intensive Care Unit. Among ICU patients, 139 patients are not fully vaccinated or have an unknown vaccination status, and 15 are fully vaccinated.

In Ontario, 30,575 vaccine doses were given in the last 24 hours. Over 10.6 million people in Ontario are fully vaccinated, which is 81.9% of the population that is eligible for a vaccine. Meanwhile, 86.8% of people in Ontario who are eligible for a vaccine have had at least one dose.

Sources:

1. <https://covid19tracker.ca/index.html>
2. <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/ontario-reports-573-new-cases-of-covid-19-and-10-deaths-1.5616330>

COVID-19 and Thanksgiving – how to host a safe celebration and advice for handling unvaccinated guests

Thanksgiving is a time where friends and family gather, however, with COVID-19 and the Delta variant, celebrations should proceed with caution and large gatherings should be avoided.

This is the first major holiday we have had where COVID-19 public health measures have been loosened.

It is likely that COVID-19 cases will increase following the Thanksgiving weekend. As one expert says, “the biggest risk that we've seen throughout the pandemic is holidays. And they don't have to be statutory holidays. We've seen this with Mother's Day and Father's Day”

Here are some tips from an infectious disease specialist for a safer Thanksgiving:

1. Move Thanksgiving outdoors if possible
2. If you must be inside, limit the amount of people and allow fresh air into the home. Open your windows and doors. Ensure good ventilation – this will help circulate the air
3. In Ontario, indoor gatherings are capped at 25 people and outdoor gatherings are capped at 100, however, it is recommended that these numbers be much lower
4. Consider participating virtually
5. Provide all necessary supplies, such as hand sanitizer, soap, and water
6. Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces
7. Ensure everyone who is eligible is vaccinated
8. Screen guests for COVID-19 symptoms - ask guests who have any symptoms not to join
9. Make a list of guests attending in case it is needed for contact tracing
10. Masking may be appropriate if individuals are unvaccinated

So, how is it best to approach vaccination conversations?

Abdullah Shihpar, a writer, and public health researcher at Brown University, said it is best to address the issue head on. Speak to guests about their vaccination status and create boundaries regarding who may or may not attend your celebration.

“It can be easy to confuse it for a political disagreement, and people don't want to make Thanksgiving political. But it is very important to remember that it's not a political issue. It is a matter of infection control.” Unvaccinated individuals put everyone at risk.

We hope you have a safe and happy Thanksgiving!

Sources:

1. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/health/coronavirus/infectious-disease-experts-on-hosting-a-safe-thanksgiving-celebration-1.5610575>
2. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/thanksgiving-vaccines-covid-pandemic-advice-1.6198954>

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's a safe transportation option to go to your vaccine appointment:

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 their 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 is running virtually on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1pm. 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.

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 (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. Follow all directions from your medical provider or your local health unit at the following phone numbers:

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.