

Coronavirus: COVID-19
Current Update – August 25 2021

As of August 25th, 2021, Canada has a total of 1,476,812 confirmed cases of COVID-19. Ontario has 561,297 cases and Toronto has 173,312 cases.

Ontario reports more than 650 new cases of COVID-19 after fewer than 500 yesterday

Today, there are 660 new cases of COVID-19 in Ontario, up from 486 yesterday and 639 the day before. The seven-day average is 625, up from 495 at this time last week. The positivity rate is at 2.4%, down from 3% yesterday.

Of these 660 new infections, 279 are in people who are unvaccinated, 114 are in people who are confirmed to be fully vaccinated, 52 are in people whose vaccination status is unknown, and 41 are in people who are partially vaccinated.

Today's cases were found in: Toronto (129), Peel Region (82), Windsor-Essex (47), York Region (45), Hamilton (45), Ottawa (12), and Niagara Region (11). All other health units in Ontario reported fewer than 10 new cases.

According to the province, there are at least 161 COVID-19 patients in Intensive Care Units (ICU) in Ontario hospitals, and 92 of them are breathing with the help of a ventilator.

Last year, the provincial government said that hospitals will have to start cutting back on surgeries once the number of COVID-19 patients in ICUs goes beyond 150. The head of the Ontario Hospital Association issued a statement today saying that increasing the number of vaccinated people will help reduce the burden on hospitals and minimize any disruption to hospitals providing non-COVID-related services.

Over 75% of eligible people in Ontario have had both doses and are fully vaccinated, and over 83% of eligible people in Ontario have had at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

Source:

1. <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/ontario-logs-fewer-than-500-new-covid-19-cases-for-first-time-in-five-days-1.5559094>
2. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-covid-aug-25-2021-1.6152600>
3. <https://covid19tracker.ca/provincevac.html?p=ON>

Public Health Ontario says that herd immunity is impossible unless young children are vaccinated

Public Health Ontario published a new report about what the pandemic will look like this fall and winter. In this report, they stated that herd immunity won't be possible unless there is a vaccine for children who are younger than 12 years old.

Click [here](#) for a simple explanation of herd immunity.

Basically, according to an older report by Public Health Ontario, "Herd immunity refers to a state where a significant proportion of the population is immune to an infection." As a result, the number of "people who can be infected and transmit the infection" reduces dramatically.

As a community, we want herd immunity because having a high number of vaccinated people in a community protects "those who can't be vaccinated, such as newborns or those who have compromised immune systems".

In January, Public Health Ontario estimated that 56% to 89% of Ontario's population would require vaccination against COVID-19 to achieve herd immunity, which is similar to "the range from several publications estimating 40 to 90% vaccination coverage is required to achieve herd immunity for COVID-19." After the Delta variant became prevalent, top scientists claimed that the approximate percentage of the population who need to be vaccinated is as high as 80 to 90%.

However, after studying more data about the Delta variant, Public Health Ontario now says that if we want to reach herd immunity, the percentage of the population that would need to be vaccinated is higher than the number of people who are eligible to get vaccinated.

"The critical threshold for vaccination is now estimated to be at least 90 per cent of the Ontario population, and over 100 per cent of the vaccine-eligible population," Public Health Ontario says.

"You often hear in the general public people get upset, they say 'the goal posts keep changing,' and the answer to that is yes, of course the goal posts are changing because the virus has changed. This is a much more transmissible variant which means you have to vaccinate a greater proportion of your population in order to keep the virus under control," says infectious diseases specialist Dr. Isaac Bogoch.

A study in the Journal of Travel Medicine published this month found that the Delta variant is nearly twice as transmissible as all of the other variants that came before it.

Yesterday, Chief Medical Officer of Health Dr. Kieran Moore said that he does not expect COVID-19 case counts to stay low for a long time until 90% of the population is fully vaccinated. Dr. Moore expects that this will happen sometime in spring 2022.

The newest Public Health Ontario report says, “Individuals under 12 years of age will not be vaccinated when they are expected to return to in-person learning in September, and are therefore a population where Delta will circulate as more community-level public health measures are lifted.”

In other words, there isn't a vaccine for children who are younger than 12 years old, and this is a significant part of the population that can't contribute to herd immunity. But, they can spread the virus to their households, especially as school starts up. So, they expect that the Delta variant will be spread by children to adults as public health measures are relaxed.

Public Health Ontario suggests that schools develop different policies for daycares and elementary schools (where children will be unvaccinated) and high schools (where children over age 12 are eligible to be vaccinated). These different school settings should have a different minimum number of COVID-19 cases that require further action. For example, in schools with younger children who can't be vaccinated, action should be taken more quickly than in high schools where students can be vaccinated.

Public Health Ontario also suggests that parents of children who go to elementary school and daycare get vaccinated.

Sources:

1. <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/herd-immunity-no-longer-possible-without-vaccinating-young-children-public-health-ontario-says-1.5560431>
2. <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/covid-wwksf/2021/02/wwksf-herd-immunity.pdf?la=en>
3. <https://www.therecord.com/news/waterloo-region/2021/06/13/herd-immunity-against-covid-19-will-take-time-and-global-effort-waterloo-expert.html>

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:

March of Dimes

Caregiving and Resources

Date: Monday, September 13, 2021 at 2:00 pm.

In this webinar, Heather Cresswell will share her the emotional and physical struggles of caregiving and the wonderful support she received for over 34 years. There will be tips and testimonials for all Caregivers. She will discuss her approach with her Mom on how she dealt with regular daily activities, appointments and services. She will give insight on what takes place when caring for a loved one long term.

Register:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=LgLPEQJhz0Oew_OpyuNE5Y_YdjYHf-hHnLBGvolxLIpUMIAzQTBfMDc0T09PWdk0S00xRUhMWIBMSy4u

3-Part Series with Caroline Tapp-McDougall

Session 3: Slow Caregiving

Date: RESCHEDULED for Monday, September 20th at 2:00pm.

Register:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=LgLPEQJhz0Oew_OpyuNE5Y_YdjYHf-hHnLBGvolxLIpUMIAzQTBFMDc0T09PWDk0S00xRUhMWIBMSy4u

Caregiver Support e-Learning Sessions (ongoing)

These sessions are delivered entirely online. This learning model enables you to work through these sessions at your own pace and time. There are 7 short videos and 4 modules. Each module takes about 30 minutes. These sessions provide tools to meet the unique needs of caregivers with the aim of reducing stress and learning new coping and problem-solving skills.

Register:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=LgLPEQJhz0Oew_OpyuNE5Y_YdjYHf-hHnLBGvolxLIpUMIAzQTBFMDc0T09PWDk0S00xRUhMWIBMSy4u

Caregiver Connection Group (paused until September)

Caregiver Webinars and Caregiver Conversations will not take place in August. They will re-start on September 9, 2021 at 2:00 pm. You will need to re-register, and please do this before September.

Register or re-register:

<https://www.marchofdimes.ca/en-ca/programs/Pages/Online-Support.aspx#Conversation>

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.

3-Part Series with Caregiving – A Family Affair

This series happened in April, and answered the question: How can families remain strong and intact throughout the caregiving experience? If you missed it or would like to re-watch it, please click below. The access code for all sessions is Care2021.

Session 1: How Care Shapes Family - The first webinar in this series will explore how families change when care needs cause everyone to examine the workability of old family dynamics.

Click [here](#) to watch.

Session 2: Remaking the Family The second webinar in this series will explore how to intentionally reshape family relationships and dynamics in order to build a strong and sustainable care team. Click [here](#) to watch

Session 3: A Toolkit for Caregivers - The third and final episode in this series will offer tools and strategies to assess the wellbeing of family members individually and gauge how well the family is meeting challenges as a team. Click [here](#) to watch.

For recordings of previous webinars please contact Angie Clark at aclark@marchofdimes.ca.

If you or someone you know uses Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), and requires resources related to COVID-19, please contact Sarah (sarah.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 back 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 Outreach

Communication Facilitator Sarah, at 416-222-4448 or

sarah.nydp@gmail.com.