

COVID-19: Update #20

Test children who are symptomatic and who attend child care/day camps and schools

Throat swabs can be used for children who refuse NP swabs

Updated: Reopening Retirement Homes

Updated: Resuming Visits in Long-Term Care Homes & Congregate Living Settings

Attention: Physicians, Emergency Departments, Infection Control Practitioners, Occupational Health Practitioners, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Nurse Practitioners, EMS, Designated Officers, Midwives, Family Health Teams, Pharmacies, Central LHIN, NSM LHIN, Beausoleil First Nation, Moose Deer Point First Nation, Rama First Nation, Wahta First Nation, Long-term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, Hospices

Date: August 5, 2020

The most current case count for laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) region are available at [Simcoe Muskoka Health Stats](#)ⁱ.

Testing Recommendations for Children:

With some child cares already reopened and as schools will open in September, **it is important for children attending child care/day camps and school settings who display symptoms consistent with COVID-19 to be tested for the purposes of early detection, prevention, control of outbreaks and surveillance in those settings.** Even with atypical symptom presentation and low prevalence in the community, or low clinical likelihood in some children, we encourage testing where possible. Moreover, without a test done the child may be asked to self-isolate for 14 days from the onset of symptoms.

A nasopharyngeal (NP) swab or nasal swab is preferred over a throat swab due to greater sensitivity. **However, we have noticed that some parents will only accept throat swabs for their children because of the discomfort from NP swabs, or a history of nose bleeds.** A throat swab is acceptable and encouraged if the NP swab is not an option or the patient refuses the NP swab.

Viral culture kits (#390081) that include six throat swabs and six vials of universal transport media can be ordered from Public Health Ontario (PHO) Laboratory using the [linked requisition](#). These are the same swabs used for herpes/STI viral cultures. More information is available in PHO's [COVID-19 Laboratory Testing Q&As](#).

Updated: Reopening Retirement Homes

On July 22, 2020, the [Reopening Retirement Homes](#) policy document was updated regarding visitations and short-term absences. [Visitor signage](#) is now available on our website.

Updated: Resuming Visits in Long-Term Care Homes & Congregate Living Settings

On July 15 and 22, 2020, the Resuming Visits policy documents for [Long-Term Care Homes](#) and [Congregate Living Settings](#) were updated respectively.

There are a number of other resources and documents available through our Health Professional Portal at www.smdhu.org/hportal as well as through [Public Health Ontario](#)ⁱⁱ and the [Government of Ontario](#)ⁱⁱⁱ

For further healthcare worker information regarding COVID-19 or to report a suspect or confirmed case of COVID-19, please contact the Infectious Diseases Team at (705) 721-7520 extension 8809 during business hours (Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.) or after hours at 1-888-225-7851.

ⁱ <http://www.simcoemuskokahealthstats.org/topics/infectious-diseases/a-h/covid-19>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/>

ⁱⁱⁱ http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/2019_guidance.aspx.

