

COVID-19 Case & Contact Management: Update #34 Revised Case and Contact Management

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: September 16, 2021

Local Epidemiology & Reporting

Last week, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) recorded 196 cases, reflecting an incidence of 32.4 cases per 100,000 population for September 5 to September 11. Case counts have been trending upwards since mid-July as we enter the fourth wave. The most current case counts for laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases in the SMDHU region are available at [Simcoe Muskoka HealthSTATS](#)

To better manage our limited staff resources the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) is no longer conducting case and contact management on the weekends. We recognize that this will lead to a delay in initiating follow up and we also anticipate that this delay will increase as the case counts rise. SMDHU is also utilizing Ontario's Provincial Work Force (PWF) and Public Health Ontario to assist with case and contact management for COVID-19, in addition to our own case/contact management and outbreak team.

Revised Case and Contact Management

The Ministry recently released an updated version of the case and contact management guide and supporting documents which can be located here:

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

Contacts of COVID-19

- Contacts need to quarantine for 10 days from the last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19.
- Both vaccinated and unvaccinated contacts are advised to test immediately upon notification of exposure and again on or after day 7. If the first test is on day 7 or after their exposure, then they only need to test once.



- If high risk contacts do not go for testing on or after day 7, SMDHU may require under certain circumstances, an additional 10-day period of isolation, given the possibility of an asymptomatic infection that could be contagious for up to 10 days. The total period of isolation would then be 20 days after last exposure to the COVID case.
- Fully vaccinated high-risk contacts are generally not required to isolate if they remain asymptomatic. However, if the exposure is suspected or confirmed to be a variant other than Alpha (originating from the UK) or Delta or if they reside in a congregate living setting, they may be advised to isolate due to decreased effectiveness of the vaccine against Beta, Gamma, and other variants.
- Fully vaccinated high-risk contacts are expected to monitor for symptoms, notify their employers of their exposure to a case, and wear a mask and maintain physical distancing when outside of the home to reduce the risk of transmission to others in the event they become a case.
- If the symptomatic high-risk contact is fully immunized or previously infected/tested positive in the last 90 days and were cleared from their initial infection, they may end self-isolation after receiving a negative test result and once symptoms have been resolving for 24 hours. If they are experiencing gastrointestinal (GI) symptoms (nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain), symptoms need to be resolving for at least 48 hours. Note that if the infection/positive test was greater than 90 days ago, we assume they no longer have adequate immunity and for the purposes of case and contact management, if they are not fully vaccinated, classify them as unvaccinated.

Symptomatic Individuals

On-going importance of testing anyone who presents with new or worsening symptoms, including:

- Fever and/or chills
- New onset of cough or worsening chronic cough
- Shortness of breath
- Decrease or loss of sense of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Rhinorrhea
- Nasal congestion
- Abdominal pain that is persistent or ongoing
- Headache
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Decreased or lack of appetite (for young children)

All suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 must be reported to SMDHU. Additionally, if an outbreak or cluster is suspected at one location (for example if you are seeing an increase in testing of symptomatic individuals from one location), please ensure to report that as well. To report a suspect or confirmed case of COVID-19 or suspected outbreaks, 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.)

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