

February 19th, 2020

Update #3 on COVID-19

The novel coronavirus has now been officially named “COVID-19” by the World Health Organization and we will be referring to it accordingly in future correspondence with you. The outbreak continues to expand, but remains primarily focused in China.

BCCDC Health Provider information updates, infection prevention and control resources and laboratory testing information are available at: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/coronavirus-%28novel%29>

Testing for COVID-19 and Testing Criteria

Work is currently underway to implement COVID-19 testing in Island Health, which will improve test turnaround times for patients and clinicians. Currently, testing is occurring at the BC Public Health Laboratory in Vancouver.

Please immediately contact your local Medical Health officer for patients of concern including those with:

- Compatible symptoms of COVID-19 infection (e.g. fever, cough, or difficulty breathing)
- AND history of travel to **affected areas of China** within two weeks prior to illness onset OR other index of suspicion (e.g. contact with an ill person with such travel history).

A Medical Health Officer is available 24/7 for guidance on appropriate testing and precautions. We can be reached during business hours (see phone numbers on left side of page) or after-hours at 1-800-204-6166.

Patient Management & Specimen Collection

For patients meeting the above criteria:

- Offer them a surgical mask and place them in a separate room.
- Use contact and droplet precautions during assessment and sample collection. This includes gloves, gowns, surgical mask and eye protection. An N95 respirator is NOT necessary (except for aerosol generating procedures such as intubation, bronchoscopy).
- Obtain a nasopharyngeal and/or viral throat swab using a red or blue topped COPAN swab with Universal Transport Media (UTM). It is preferable to collect specimens from both sites. These are the same collection devices routinely used for NP swabs for flu/other respiratory virus testing or skin/mucosal swabs for HSV/VZV viral testing. UNSUITABLE collection devices systems will be REJECTED and delay testing. These include: COPAN E-swabs for Pertussis testing, bacterial throat swabs for Group A Streptococcus testing, dry swabs, etc.
- Ensure samples are promptly sent to an Island Health lab. Samples sent to Life Labs will significantly increase turnaround time for results at this time. All samples are currently tested at the Public Health Laboratory in Vancouver.

**Office of the
Chief Medical
Health Officer**

NORTH ISLAND

250.331.8591

Charmaine Enns
MD, MHSc, FRCPC
355-11th Street
Courtenay, BC V9N 1S4

CENTRAL ISLAND

250.739.6304

Paul Hasselback
MD, MSc, FRCPC
3rd Floor 6475 Metral Drive
Nanaimo, BC V9T 2L9

COWICHAN AREA

250.850.2100

Local 45528
Shannon Waters
MD MHSc FRCPC
601-222 Cowichan Way
Duncan, BC V9L 6P4

SOUTH ISLAND

250.519.3406

Richard Stanwick, CMHO
MD, MSc, FRCPC, FAAP

Murray Fyfe
MD, MSc, FRCPC

Dee Hoyano
MD, FRCPC

430 –1900 Richmond Ave.
Victoria, BC V8R 4R2

After Hours On Call

1.800.204.6166

- If the patient is well enough to return home, they may be discharged with a surgical mask and advised to isolate at home until contacted by Island Health Communicable Disease.

Health Canada Advice for People Arriving from China

Health Canada is currently recommending that travellers who have travelled to Hubei province in the last 14 days, self-isolate and stay at home for 14 days after leaving Hubei province. In addition, these travellers should contact the local public health authority within 24 hours of arriving in Canada.

Travellers from other parts of mainland China are advised to monitor themselves for symptoms for 14 days and to self-isolate and immediately contact their local public health authority if they feel sick or develop symptoms. They are not expected to self-isolate at home if asymptomatic.

Refer to the Health Canada COVID-19 travel advisory page for more information:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/latest-travel-health-advice.html>

Communicable Disease Public Health Management

People identified as close contacts of a confirmed COVID-19 case will be contacted directly by Communicable Disease. Self-isolation in the home for 14 days after last exposure to the case, as well as daily symptom monitoring is the current recommendation. Public health will conduct the daily monitoring. Any contact who becomes symptomatic is to contact Communicable Disease immediately, and arrangements will be made for further assessment and testing. Please see below for Communicable Disease office phone numbers.

Communicable Disease Office	Address	Phone Number
South Island CD Office	1947 Cook St Victoria	1.866.665.6626
Central Island CD Office	#8 – 1599 Dufferin Crescent Nanaimo	1.866.770.7798
North Island CD Office	355 11th Street Courtenay	1.877.887.8835



Dee Hoyano, MD, FRCPC, CCFP
Medical Health Officer