



**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

Sandra Allison  
MD MPH CCFP FCFP FRCPC

Mike Benusic  
MD MPH FRCPC

3rd Floor, 6475 Metral Drive  
Nanaimo, BC V9T 2L9

**COWICHAN AREA**

250.737.2020

Shannon Waters  
MD MHSc FRCPC  
4th floor  
238 Government St  
Duncan, BC V9L 1A5

**SOUTH ISLAND**

250.519.3406

Richard Stanwick,  
CMHO  
MD MSc FRCPC FAAP

Murray Fyfe  
MD MSc FRCPC

Dee Hoyano  
MD FRCPC CCFP

1837 Fort Street  
Victoria, BC V8R 1J6

**After Hours On Call**

1.800.204.6166

**MEDICAL HEALTH OFFICERS'  
NEWSLETTER  
No. 329**

March 30, 2021

**COVID-19 Update #13**

**Updates:**

*Vaccination*

- More than 125,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been provided within Island Health, and 15% of the adult population have been vaccinated.
- The provincial schedule continues to be expedited, accessible at [bit.ly/365whhR](https://bit.ly/365whhR).
- Physicians can express interest in vaccinating by completing the form here: [medicalstaff.islandhealth.ca/covid-19-vaccine-immunizers](https://medicalstaff.islandhealth.ca/covid-19-vaccine-immunizers).
- Under recommendation of NACI, the AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD vaccine has been paused in BC for those under 55 due to rare events of vaccine-induced prothrombotic immune thrombocytopenia (VIPIT). The occurrence of this has been reported to be 1-10 in 1,000,000 people vaccinated. 430 doses of AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD have been provided within Island Health. More information can be found at [bit.ly/3daD908](https://bit.ly/3daD908).

*Variants of Concern*

- Variants of concern are specific SARS-CoV-2 variants that are flagged as being potentially more transmissible, virulent, and/or less likely to be protected against by current vaccines.
- A summary of these variants from the BCCDC can be found at [bit.ly/2QTGSYR](https://bit.ly/2QTGSYR).
- All COVID-19 cases identified are screened within Island Health labs for the common mutation of the three main variants of concern. Case and contact management teams follow specific guidance for management of variant of concern cases and contacts. Confirmatory testing is performed by BCCDC.
- Currently, variants of concern make up a small minority of cases identified within Island Health. However, the proportion of cases due to variants of concern is rising within Island Health and throughout BC, much of Canada, and globally.

**Resources:**

- One-stop-shop for medical staff at [medicalstaff.islandhealth.ca/covid-19](https://medicalstaff.islandhealth.ca/covid-19)
- Surveillance:
  - Island Health: [islandhealth.ca/learn-about-health/covid-19/outbreaks-and-exposures](https://islandhealth.ca/learn-about-health/covid-19/outbreaks-and-exposures)
  - BCCDC: [bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data](https://bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data): all of BC and by Health Authority, Health Service Delivery Area, and Local Health Area, also includes weekly in-depth situation reports
- Provincial restrictions: [gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/restrictions](https://gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/restrictions)
  - *New as of March 29: no indoor dining, no indoor group exercise, closure of Whistler Blackcomb, suspension of indoor religious gatherings and worship*



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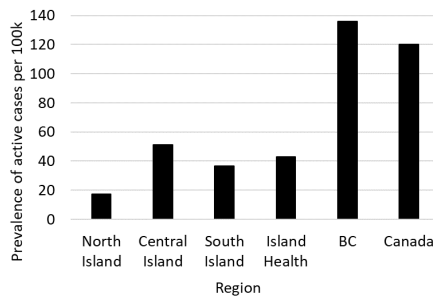
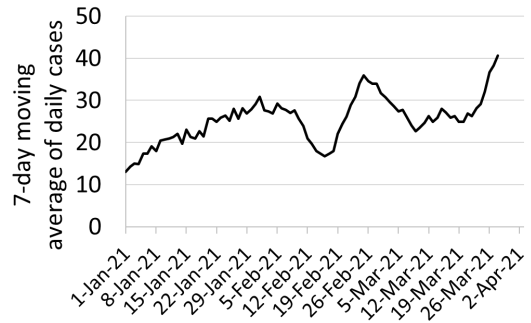
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March 30, 2021

COVID-19 Update #13

Situational assessment:

- COVID-19 daily incidence in Island Health has fluctuated over February and March, with a steep incline over the past week, corresponding to a similar incline for the province as a whole.
COVID-19 activity has increased substantially in South Island, particularly in Victoria.



Activity remains relatively high in Central Island and relatively low in North Island. Local Health Area level data can be accessed at bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data.

- 7-day lab testing percent positivity has increased to 5.4% - the highest seen during the pandemic. Almost all calling into the Call Centre are tested the day of or day after. For clients requiring COVID-19 testing but are unable to attend a testing site in-person, mobile testing may be available.
While the incidence of COVID-19 is rising, the proportion hospitalized has decreased, correlating with a younger median age of cases and increasing vaccination rates.
COVID-19 cases continue to be contacted well within 24h of notification of a positive test result, and contacts are typically traced and managed within 24 hours as well.
The majority of cases in Island Health continue to have an identified source of infection, with most linked to a known case or cluster.
Currently, there are no active outbreaks in hospitals, long-term care, or assisted living sites.