

COVID-19 Status

MAY 28, 2020

We have confirmed 25 new cases of COVID-19 over the past 24 hours, bringing the provincial total to 6,926. Of the total cases, we suspect 645 cases may have been acquired in the community from an unknown source (these cases are not included in outbreak data). Currently, there are 43 cases in hospital, with four in an intensive care unit. 6,106 cases have now recovered, leaving 679 active cases in the province.

We must report the sad news of two additional deaths in the past 24 hours, bringing the provincial total to 141 lives lost in Alberta related to COVID-19. Though we have seen reductions in the case numbers, we must remember that Alberta is still experiencing losses related to COVID-19. We extend our deepest sympathies to those who have lost loved ones at this very difficult time.

3,168 tests were completed over the last 24 hours, bringing our total COVID-19 tests to 245,949 since the start of the pandemic.

Things You Need to Know

Multi-system Inflammatory Syndrome in Children

While the most severe outcomes of COVID-19 have been seen in the older members of Alberta's population, or in those who have other medical conditions, we continue to monitor the ways that this infection can affect the health of those who become infected.

In the past several weeks, cases of a new condition called multi-system inflammatory syndrome in children, or MIS-C, have been reported in a number of jurisdictions. It is similar to an inflammatory illness known as Kawasaki Disease, and responds to treatments such as steroids. MIS-C involves inflammation of multiple organs, including the heart, kidneys, blood and nervous system. Fever is a key feature of this syndrome, and other symptoms can include rash, vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain.

It has been seen in other jurisdictions around the world and potential cases are also being explored in other provinces across the country. Reported cases involve children and adolescents who have been recently infected with the virus, developing the syndrome several weeks to a month after an infection.

The early information available suggests that the majority of children who have COVID-19 are not expected to experience this syndrome. However, the disease will be reportable in Alberta in order to monitor any possible cases and improve our understanding of this illness. This is an important reminder that we continue to learn new things about this virus, and that we must continue to be cautious in our re-launch.

Staying Healthy and Safe during Re-launch

Though the province is gradually re-launching, it is clear that the health risk posed by this pandemic has not gone away. Balancing precautions with new freedoms will be necessary to continue to limit the spread of COVID-19 in the days, weeks and even months ahead.

Here are some quick tips to keep in mind as you go about your daily activities in our current reality:

- Continue to practice physical distancing – that means keeping at least two metres distance from people outside your household or cohort family.
- Still try to limit the number of times you need to leave the house for errands.
- Limit indoor gatherings to no more than 15 people and outdoor gatherings to no more than 50. In both cases, do not share food or drinks and always maintain physical distance.
- As being in the same car does not provide two metres distancing, carpooling is not recommended at this time. If you must share a car with someone outside of your household for an essential need, please ensure there are no more than two people in the car, one in front and one in back, to improve distancing.
- Many families are taking advantage of restaurants opening up again. Please be respectful and mindful of the precautions restaurants have in place. This includes tables of no more than six individuals and spacing of at least six feet between all tables. We also recommend ordering your own food and not eating from shared plates.
- Continue to wash your hands regularly with soap and warm water, or clean hands with hand sanitizer when on the go.
- If you feel ill, stay home and use our [online self-assessment tool](#) to determine if you should be tested. Even if you are just feeling generally unwell, you should use the tool to assess your situation.
- At this time, we ask those who are able to continue to work from home within their role to do so.
- For those who continue to be in the workplace or are returning to the workplace, follow all guidelines in place for your site. The best way to continue to protect yourself and those around you are point-of-care risk assessments, appropriate PPE use, and physical distancing when close proximity is not required to deliver patient care.
- Additionally, hand hygiene continues to be critical to our staff and patients. Please be sure to wash hands at all stages of donning and doffing PPE, and regularly throughout all shifts, as per usual, and regularly clean high-touch surfaces.
- Additional information on timing and support for staff returning to the workplace will be available in the coming weeks.
- Stay informed. Information and guidance on the re-launch can be found on the Government of Alberta's site and alberta.ca/covid19. For more from AHS, continue to visit AHS.ca/covid.

Accepting Food Donations at AHS Sites

In response to community members hoping to show their appreciation to our staff, certain food donations can be accepted in our facilities. Sites will now be able to accept food from companies, provided the items are shelf-stable and individually wrapped, such as a single-serving cookie in its own packaging, or items that can be consumed with acceptable food safety timelines, such as single-serve ice cream cups or individually packaged meals.

Each site will be responsible for the management of these donations and must work within appropriate COVID-19 protocols to ensure the safe distribution of these items to staff members. If sites have questions about this process, please contact [Corinne Senetchko](#) with the Office of the VP, Clinical Operations.

Wherever possible and appropriate, donations should be made through the appropriate health foundation. If you have questions about how to contact your local foundation, please contact [Foundation Relations](#).

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Tip of the Day

The daily series - *PPE Tip of the Day* – features quick and simple reminders you can take forward into your practice, from shift to shift.

Fit Testing Reminder

AHS continues to complete fit testing across all clinical areas, to ensure staff are fit-tested for alternate types of N95 respirators being procured for potential use in Alberta. This is specific to those staff who provide direct patient care that may result in exposure to an airborne communicable disease or who may perform aerosol-generating medical procedures (AGMPs) on patients with certain confirmed or suspected infections including COVID-19. You will be notified by Workplace Health and Safety when it is time to schedule fit-testing in your area. Please be sure to make this a priority in your schedule. To learn more about when to use N95 respirators in your frontline work, visit www.ahs.ca/covidppe. Learn more about the fit-testing work [here](#).

To see previous PPE Tips of the Day, please visit the PPE Tips archive, [here](#).

Disinfectant Wipes Update

Access to our usual ready-to-use (RTU) disinfectant wipes and RTU liquid product formulations for surface disinfectant supplies may vary during the pandemic; however, all AHS provided product substitutions are confirmed to be effective for COVID-19. Contracting, Procurement and Supply Management (CPSM) is shifting distribution of products based on availability and local needs.

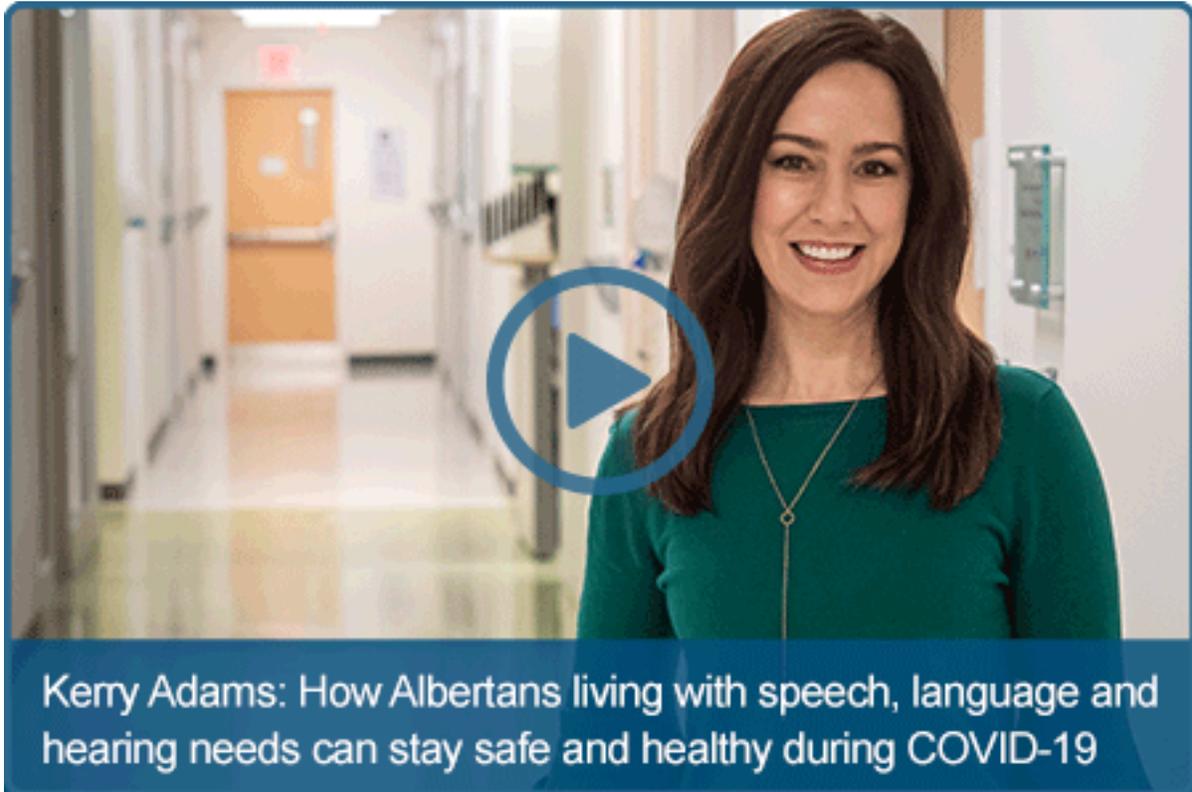
Although CaviWipes™ are currently constrained for stock in RTU wipe and liquid formulations, AHS has sufficient supply of other formulations of RTU wipes and liquid disinfectant. Again, all of these are effective against COVID-19.

Continued judicious use of all products remains central to our ongoing management of supplies during pandemic. Here are some simple tips to guide selection and use of products:

- RTU disinfectant wipes and dry wipes provided with RTU liquid disinfectants are most appropriate for cleaning and disinfecting [non-critical medical devices](#), non-medical items such as [electronic devices](#) and some environmental cleaning tasks where a quick turn-around-time is required, e.g., bed and immediate patient environment after discharge.
- Depending on availability, dry wipes provided with RTU liquid disinfectants may be used for cleaning and disinfecting environmental surfaces. For more information, refer to resources available on our [Infection Prevention and Control \(IPC\) External Website](#), Equipment Cleaning, Disinfection and Storage tab, such as [Principles of Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection](#), [Cleaning and Disinfection during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Addressing Disinfectant Supply Challenges](#) and [Ready-to-Use Disinfectant Wipes](#).
- As recommended in the [Cleaning and Disinfection during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Addressing Disinfectant Supply Challenges](#), if RTU disinfectants are not available, are not appropriate for the task, or the manufacturer's instructions are not available, consult with the CPSM site supervisor.

AHS COVID-19 Podcast – Speech and Hearing Month

One in 10 Albertans has a communication need, meaning they have difficulty expressing themselves, hearing or understanding a message, or having others understand them. May is Speech and Hearing month and in this edition of the [AHS COVID-19 podcast](#), AHS speech pathologist Kerry Adams answers questions about the impact the COVID-19 pandemic is having on Albertans living with speech, language and hearing needs and what they can do to stay safe and healthy.



Cyberattacks Related to COVID-19 Continue

Please exercise caution in handling any email with a COVID-19-related subject line, attachment, or hyperlink, and be wary of any COVID-19 related social media plea, text, or phone call. Cyber criminals and hackers are taking advantage of the heightened anxiety around COVID-19 by sending emails with malicious attachments or links to fraudulent websites, to trick victims into revealing sensitive business or personal information, or donating to fraudulent charities or fake causes.

To stay safe, please take the following precautions.

- Beware of unsolicited emails and avoid clicking on links or opening attachments.
- Do not respond to email solicitations asking you to reveal business, personal or financial information.
- Use only trusted sources for up-to-date fact-based COVID-19 information such as ahs.ca/covid or [Alberta Health](#)
- Always verify a charity's authenticity before donating by checking out their official website and always look for the secure browser 'lock' icon before making donations.

Learn more about some of the common tricks cybercriminals use to access your information, by viewing [Don't be fooled by Scammers](#) and visit [InfoCare](#) for information on all privacy and information security matters.

Scientific Advisory Group Review - Is singing a risk for transmission of COVID-19?

While limited in quantity, published literature suggests that singing may generate more respiratory particles (including aerosols) than normal talking.

The Scientific Advisory Committee found it was unclear whether the risk of transmission of COVID-19 that has been documented associated with singing was caused by aerosolization of respiratory particles, large droplets being expelled, or through a combination of both, or if other social behaviors associated with being in close quarters (close contact, handshaking) could have also contributed. Although the evidence was limited, the committee agreed that the possibility that singing could lead to COVID-19 transmission could not be excluded. There was agreement that restrictions on singing should be maintained while COVID-19 is circulating within the community, even when relaxations start to be introduced.

For more information, see the [Rapid Review](#).

We Continue to Give during COVID-19

Thank you for your continued compassion and commitment to the COVID-19 response. Due to this pandemic, many vulnerable citizens are in even greater need of access to supports and services. By working together, we can help those that need it most.

If you are interested in [donating to a COVID-19 relief fund in your community](#), you can do so through the [United Way](#), who raise funds for healthcare across Alberta. Thank you for all you are doing to fight for and support your families, patients, and all Albertans.

In the Zones

Zone Emergency Operations Centre (ZEOC) Update – Edmonton

PPE Coaching

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is a key element in preventing the transmission of disease causing microorganisms. It has been vital in protecting frontline and essential workers in the fight against COVID-19.

To ensure PPE is being used effectively and safely, the PPE Working Group initiated a campaign called “We’ve Got Your Back” at the University of Alberta Hospital site. The campaign provides education and resources to help healthcare workers with proper PPE practices. PPE coaches are selected from various departments and are easily identifiable with green PPE coach stickers. They provide support on the units to help frontline workers with proper donning and doffing practices, help prevent self-contamination and ensure nobody risks bringing anything home to their families.

“Educators and coaches have gone above and beyond in providing education to units, especially those working on COVID-19 designated units,” says Tara Meyer, Cardiac Rehabilitation Program Manager,

Mazankowski Heart Institute. "People have been really open to working with different departments and learning from them."

In order to provide education and support around PPE, the Working group provided PPE Coach education through drop-in sessions and virtual learning opportunities. A PPE Coach Observation Checklist was developed by Unit 3D3 to guide the education. Donning and Doffing education support was provided for groups such as Nursing, Support Services, Physicians and Residents. The PPE Working Group has also worked with the eSIM team to provide simulation walkthroughs for clinical nurse educators, managers and staff. In addition, unit walk-throughs with Infection Prevention and Control and Workplace Health and Safety were conducted on medicine units slated to receive COVID-19 positive patients, to provide an opportunity for questions and answers. It's all been a team effort.

"The challenge I presented to the team was to present PPE safety in an innovative way that would support all staff and physicians," says Cathy Osborne, Senior Operating Officer, University of Alberta Hospital. "This team went above and beyond in creating an initiative that is engaging, informative and ensures staff and patient safety. I would like to thank Tara Meyer, James Simon, Mary Mark, Jennifer Parsonage, Joyce New, Margaret Lidstone and Cassie Waters for their outstanding work and leadership on this important initiative."

"This pandemic has placed a huge emphasis on PPE and people have been open to the education and best practices behind it," says Meyer. "We now have a roadmap to protect our staff and prepare, should future pandemics ever arise."

Aspen House Activities

During times of uncertainty, it can be helpful to maintain normal routines to gain a sense of comfort and put anxieties at ease.

Aspen House, a designated supportive living facility in Morinville, has gone above and beyond to provide residents with a sense of wellness and comfort.

Aspen House celebrated Mother's Day, with the Recreation Team creating a travelling tea party, going room to room to visit each resident. Thanks to the generous community support of the Mornville Physiotherapy Clinic, each mother was gifted a flower for this special day.



Meanwhile, a local Morninville band, the Buttery Biscuits, got clients at Aspen House moving and grooving on a sunny afternoon. The band consists of siblings, Jonas, Ivy, and Caleb Mills, all Morinville

residents who used to volunteer at Aspen House's Bingo. They wanted to give back to their community and uplift staff and clients' spirits with their music.

The concert consisted of six songs per set and seniors were rotated in shifts to enjoy the show outside, while keeping within COVID-19 gathering guidelines. Some clients were able to take in the show from their windows. Smith Music generously provided the sound system.

"The Mills family reached out to us at Aspen House to see how they could support us during these difficult times. Their talents boosted our spirits and had people waiting excitedly for their turn to see the performance. It gave everyone something to look forward to. We are grateful to have such kind volunteers supporting us in so many ways," explained Leeza Shymka.

Music has a powerful impact on our health, decreasing stress and anxiety and easing pain. Thank you to the Buttery Biscuits for providing a fun and exciting afternoon, and thank you to the teams at Aspen House who have stepped up to create such a meaningful experience for the residents. During difficult times of separation and uncertainty, it becomes even more important to show how much we care.



Be Well - Be Kind

Mental Wellness Moment — Marriage and Relationships during a Pandemic

Many healthy marriages and relationships are being stressed during COVID-19 as partners spend much more time together, while staying safe at home. Compounding the issue: they don't have access

to other social relationships as family, friends and colleagues aren't available to them in the same way. In this Mental Wellness Moment, Dr. Nicholas Mitchell [offers advice on how to protect your marriage or relationship with a significant other, and how to have quality time together during a time of pandemic.](#)



Shout Out

We want to continue to tip our hats to our EMS teams as National Paramedics Service Week continues across Canada. The shout outs below represent the care that our EMS teams provide to Albertans when they need it most. Thank you for all you do every day in our province.

A recent AHS COVID-19 update reminded me of our amazing EMS teams across the province, but especially in Calgary who came to the rescue of my husband who had a massive heart attack just over a year ago. Society totally depends upon you to be the first responders in all crises. I am so thankful to you for your actions then and now. Because of you, my husband is by my side, keeping me company, during this trying time. :)

Anonymous

On Tuesday, May 19, EMS workers, Duane and Phil visited one of our residents at Chartwell Harbours Retirement Residence. These two gentlemen deserve a huge kudos for what they do. Given the nature of our building we make many EMS calls and even more so during COVID-19. Duane and Phil were the best paramedics we have had in the building by far. The resident was nervous about going to the hospital and feeling unsettled about what was happening to her. They both had her laughing and definitely helped her to feel more comfortable. Please pass on

my sincerest thanks for making a stressful situation into a positive one for both myself and the resident!

*Laura O'Hanley, General Manager
CHARTwell HARBOURS retirement residence*

Celebrities Celebrating AHS

Canadian actors, athletes, musicians and artists keep sending messages of appreciation for our frontline healthcare providers and teams as a gesture of gratitude and support.

Today's message comes from [Calgary Flames captain Mark Giordano](#).

"Thank you to all the AHS staff who have been working incredibly hard to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of Albertans during this time," he says. "We see you and we appreciate you."



Though we are months into this pandemic, time has not lessened the uncertainties that come with managing the spread of COVID-19 in our province. There are many things we still don't know about this illness and many questions which remain about how and when we can safely resume activities. As we continue to move through re-launch in Alberta, we ask you to remain vigilant in observing the health guidelines and protocols. We want our patients, you and your loved ones to be protected and safe, and we want to continue to keep the COVID-19 infection rate low and slow.

We hope you are able to enjoy the sunshine in Alberta and savour the extra hours of daylight that come with late spring. Stay well and healthy whether you are at work or at home. Thank you for your commitment to Albertans.

Please Note: This message has been modified from the AHS Daily Updates.

*****Please share this information as appropriate*****

*****For Alberta Health Services – Indigenous specific questions/concerns please
email ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca *****

*****For Indigenous Services Canada please
email sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca *****

Josipa Pavicic on behalf of Nadine McRee

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