



Message from the Office of the General Manager

Happy New Year – Wishing a very Happy New Year to you and your family. May the New Year bring you much happiness, peace, and good health

AC would like to take the opportunity to thank all our Nurses and Personal Support Workers who work so diligently and hard during these challenging times. For you all to risk your own health to be on the frontlines of this pandemic,

AC appreciates and thanks you!



COVID -19 Updates What is Omicron Variant?

The Omicron variant is a variant of SARS-CoV-2 that was first reported to the World Health Organization from South Africa on 24 November 2021

Current knowledge about Omicron

Researchers in South Africa and around the world are conducting studies to better understand many aspects of Omicron and will continue to share the findings of these studies as they become available.

Transmissibility: It is not yet clear whether Omicron is more transmissible (e.g., more easily spread from person to person) compared to other variants, including Delta. The number of people testing positive has risen in areas of South Africa affected by this variant, but epidemiologic studies are underway to understand if it is because of Omicron or other factors.

Vaccination protects against hospitalization

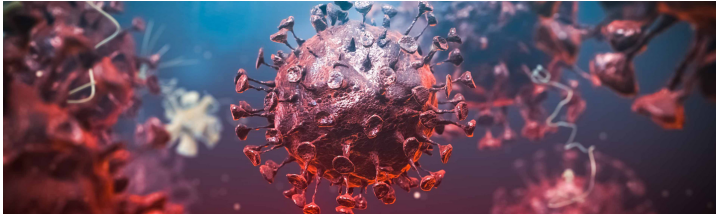
Benefits of the vaccine according to the CDC

1. COVID-19 vaccination helps protect you by creating an antibody response without you having to experience sickness.
2. Getting sick with COVID-19 can have serious consequences.
3. Getting sick with COVID-19 can cause severe illness or death, even in children, and we can't reliably predict who will have mild or severe illness.
4. You may have long-term health issues after COVID-19 infection. Even people who do not have symptoms when they are initially infected can have these ongoing health problems.
5. People who are sick with COVID-19 may spread COVID-19 to others including friends and family who are not eligible for vaccination and people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19

All viruses, including COVID-19, change over time. These changes are called mutations, and result in variants of the virus. Not all mutations are of concern. Most do not cause more severe illness. However, some mutations result in variants of concern or variants of interest.

A variant of concern has mutations that are significant to public health. Before a variant of interest is considered one of concern, scientists and public health professionals must determine if the mutations result in an actual change in the behaviour of the virus. For example, it might:

- spread more easily
- cause more severe illness
- require different treatments, or
- reduce vaccine effectiveness



Here are some tips to keep you healthy and safe:

We encourage you and your family to get vaccinated
We encourage you and your family to maintain social distancing

Wash your hands regularly

If you or your family is feeling the affects of this virus mentally, we encourage to you to please use our EAP program to help you. It is a program AC Nursing has purchased for staff and their families to use during this challenging time. It is strictly confidential – no one will know if you are using the program.

Eat healthy and exercise regularly



COVID-19 PREVENTION



Current variants of concern in Canada include:

- Alpha (B.1.1.7)
- Beta (B.1.351)
- Gamma (P.1)
- Delta (B.1.617.2)
- Omicron (B.1.1.529)

Prevention

To prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Maintain a safe distance from others (at least 1 metre), even if they don't appear to be sick.
- Wear a mask in public, especially indoors or when physical distancing is not possible.
- Choose open, well-ventilated spaces over closed ones.
- Open a window if indoors.
- Clean your hands often. Use soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Get Vaccinated
- Cover your nose and mouth with your bent elbow or a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Stay home if you feel unwell.
- If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention. Call in advance so your healthcare provider can direct you to the right health facility.

Masks

Properly fitted masks can help prevent the spread of the virus from the person wearing the mask to others. Masks alone do not protect against COVID-19, and should be combined with physical distancing and hand hygiene.



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

- ◆ Support your local community by ordering takeout when you can.
- ◆ Call your friends and family to chat on video, zoom, facetime etc.